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NUGÆ CANORÆ.

POEMS

BY

CHARLES LLOYD,

AUTHOR OF "EDMUND OLIVER," "ISABEL,"
AND TRANSLATOR OF ALFIERI.

THIRD EDITION,

WITH ADDITIONS.

43257 / 162 H5

Brama assai, poco spera, e nulla chiede.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. AND A. ARCH, CORNHILL.

1819.

PR
4890
L8A7
1819

J. M'Creery, Printer,
Black-Horse-Court, London.

DEDICATORY SONNET

TO SOPHIA.

ONCE we had joys in common:—common woes
Have lately been our portion; Friend, once loved!
And, still as much loved as 'mid sorrow's throes
'Tis possible to move, or to be moved.
Faithless I'm not, because no word that glows,
No look that cheers, accost a friend approved;
Love's language lies in more profound repose
Than that of death, since Hope has been removed
From my soul's dreams! But could'st thou *pierce* my heart,
And *see* the *tenderest thought* it doth enshrine,
'Tis, should myself and sorrow ever part,
Mine eyes shall then tell thee when sought by thine,
While blest tears gush, like children's, without art,
"*These had not flowed, wert thou again not mine.*"

CHARLES LLOYD.

London, 6th September, 1819.

ADVERTISEMENT.

ABOUT one third part of the Poems contained in this Volume is selected from a larger collection of the Author's productions, which has gone through two former editions: the pieces included in this part will be distinguished in the Index, from those which are now printed for the first time, by being marked with an asterisk. These latter ones have been written at various times, and on various occasions, since the year 1799.

The latter part of this Volume will be devoted to tales, selected from the Metamorphoses of Ovid, and intended as a specimen of a translation of that work from the Latin, completed by the Author.

PREFACE.

In almost every department of the Belles Lettres we are apt to confound our own taste with abstract perfection. We are apt to pass a judgment originating from a standard formed in our own minds, without attending to the motive which seems to have actuated the Author. In judging of poetry, nothing is more common than this.—One man, exclusively fond of smooth and artificial versification, will almost intuitively condemn a style less refined, or less flowing, than his judgment had conceived as necessary to excellence; while, on the other hand, another at-

tached to simple and wild expressions of feeling, will almost as instinctively anathematize his more polished and refined competitor. It is in vain to seek for an invariable rule of excellence in matters of taste. The best guide as to merit is experience with regard to what has, and what has not, acted pleasurably on the minds of men. Whatever pleases generally, though not sanctioned by any rule, must have merit:—whatever generally disgusts, or at least is received with universal apathy, however it may accord with theoretical systems, must be essentially defective.

The poetical character, though marked by some general features; though each individual possessing it belongs to one family, has its personal and specific distinctions. The poet may be sublime, or fanciful; wild, or correct; profound, or energetic; involved, or easy; insinuating, or simple; he may possess all these characters with advantage; and the possession

of the one shall not in the least derogate from the excellence or dignity of the other. The poetic character has not only its differences, but it has also its ranks and subordinate degrees. The epic bard certainly proposes to himself a task more arduous and exalted than those of all his competitors for poetic fame. Genius and Learning; Imagination to conceive character, and to embody abstract qualities in high and lofty personification; Intelligence to invigorate and inform the reason; Patience to describe in detail; Eloquence to excite in declamation; Fancy to delight with sportiveness, and elaborate. Information seriously to improve; are all necessary to the completion of the Epic Poet. He must be gentle and majestic; winning and sublime; various, yet pursuing one end; rich and dignified; now delighting with profusion of beauty, and now raising the soul with terrific grandeur.

The accurate conception of character, and the force and precision necessary to each portraiture; a discriminating insight with regard to the involved mazes of the passions; a selection of thoughts and words which assist action, and give a bodily shape and presence to intellectual conceptions; all these qualities, necessary to the dramatic poet, render his toil little less arduous than that of the writer who is a competitor for epic excellence. The dramatic writer will therefore claim the second niche in the temple of poetic fame.

Of poetical composition, the third in rank is the Ode. The frequent suddenness of transition, the vividness of imagery, the variety and loftiness of personification, and the impetuosity and splendour of thought and feeling, necessary to its construction, render it worthy of a high station in the gradation of poetic precedence. After

the Ode, may we not place moral or didactic poetry? Descriptive poetry associating Nature's best feelings with natural objects? Playful poetry, the child of Fancy? And last of all, sentimental poetry, the child of Sorrow?

Most persons talk of poetry as if it were merely intended to amuse a vacant hour: but if the Author be justified in affirming, that to *feel rightly* is of more importance than even to *think wisely*, since we more often act from impulse than from thought, it will be found that poetry holds no contemptible place in the scale of moral causes.

Man, originally, is merely a creature of appetites: even with considerable cultivation, we can only bring the senses to a certain niceness, by associating them with objects of virtuous refinement; we cannot, it is in vain to attempt it—we cannot produce out of them a mind which inva-

riably acts as an umpire over their claims, and despises, or sets at nought, their seductions.—Whatever, therefore, draws the senses to the side of virtue, associates natural impulses with the "better mind," is of high value in civilized life. Many persons, unthinkingly, are ready to say—what is the use of poetry? There is not any information contained in it. To such persons the Author would make the following reply. Is it of any use to have thy brute appetites chastened to exalted delight? To connect ideal charms with all the visible creation? To learn to trace a moral character, and feel a taste excited, and a passion without price gratified, by every object of pure beauty that presents itself? Is it of importance for minds of sensibility to be led from the world of Art, which is often full of disappointment, and disease, and discontent, to the more simple, and more noble, and more beautiful world of Nature, which is full of beauty, and peace, and harmony? Is it of importance

to be rather independent and happy in thy feelings than dependent and miserable? Ask thy heart these questions, and thou wilt have discovered how far the poetic gift is excellent, holy, and sublime.

In this panegyric on Poetry, every description of it is excluded by the Author, which seduces the mind and the heart to the senses; of that poetry, which, by presenting pure and blameless objects to the *former*, either keeps in just subserviency, or elevates the *latter* to them, he is alone the advocate.

Poetry is the language of the heart and imagination: and whatever in feeling refines, or animates the heart, or in imagination fires and exalts the mind, is a proper object for poetry. It is a language, too, which brings images from all the world of sense; it delights itself in bodying forth ideal shapes, and loves all new and

fanciful combinations of, and associations with, sensible objects. It is not exactly, as a modern author has defined it to be, the language of the eye: since, were the accuracy of representing visible objects alone attended to, and not any feelings or phantasies engrafted on them, it would sink into vapid description: into description, which must yield all pretensions to equality with the sister art of Painting.

Dr. Darwin defines poetry to be the language of the eye. He has succeeded, because, as an individual, he has a genius for the poetry comprised in that definition; but were all other poetry excluded, a race of meagre imitators would start up, and at last poetry herself would abandon her votaries as the only persons ignorant of her charms. There would scarcely be any end to definitions in any art, or subject of taste, were all men thus to theorize on their own genius. A landscape painter might as well de-

fine painting to be the reprehension of rural scenery, as the poetical admirer of visible objects "poetry the language of the eye."

How is the eye addressed in the lofty hymns* of the Old Testament, on which Milton professes to have formed his genius. In short, the essence of poetic excellence seems frequently to consist in avoiding every thing like accurate description; and after carefully keeping in the back ground all sources of disgust, by happily seizing on one idea necessarily involving a crowd of inferior associations, to raise the fancy, and awaken the mind to a delightful though indefinable tumult. The best epithets in poetry are often those the least determinate, and which

* "But those frequent songs throughout the law and the prophets beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical art of composition, may be easily made appear, over all kinds of lyrick poetry, to be incomparable."—*Milton's Prose Works.*

leave the greatest scope for the imagination. It is true, that to peruse such poetry with advantage, the reader should partake of the poetical conception of the author. How would our Milton or Shakspeare fare, if the definition were admitted that "poetry is the language of the eye?" Is not the author warranted, therefore, in the more loose and comprehensive one, that it is the language of the heart and imagination?

To conclude,—the following trifles have met with encouragement from those who are pleased with a delineation of the feelings of human nature. They do not affect the excellence of the higher orders of poetry; they are only the effusions of sentiment, to which, in the course of this address, the author has assigned the lowest niche in the temple of poetic fame:—and he trusts that he shall not incur the stigma of presumption in once more introducing them, toge-

ther with some younger births of the same family, hitherto unintroduced to the notice of the public, since high pretension can alone justify severe reproof.

London, Aug. 29, 1819.

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THE Author thinks it but fair as a preliminary to the following list of Errata, to state, that he fears he must take to himself the blame due to many of the errors; and the only apology he can make for such apparent negligence, is, that during the time when the sheets went to the press, he was invariably in a state of ill-health, and often almost unable to attend to any process that required minute accuracy.

ERRATA.

Page 68, line 22, *for* perpetual *read* perpetuated.
69, beginning of line 2, *for* and *read* a.
69, line 10, *for* coronet *read* coronal.
72, last line, *after* the word "promise," omit the colon.
85, *for* quando *read* quandoque.
85, *for* 4th Sat. *read* Sat. 4.
110, line 12, *for* birth *read* birch.
122, *for* vestrorum *read* vestrum.
122, 1, *for* I'll *read* I.
128, 13, *for* drink *read* drank.
129, 10, *for* ancient *read* secret.
136, Note, *for* interim i *read* interim is.
151, 6, *for* dream *read* dreamed.
153, 11, *for* more *read* morn.

POEMS.

A POETICAL EFFUSION,

WRITTEN AFTER A JOURNEY INTO NORTH WALES.

February, 1794.

Ye Powers unseen, whose pure aërial forms
  Hover on Cambria's awful mountains hoar!
Who breathe your fury in her raging storms,
  And join your deep yells to the tempest's roar,
  Assist my visionary soul to soar
Once more enraptur'd o'er your prospects drear;
  Let each sensation warm my heart once more,
That wont to prompt th' enthusiastic tear,
  And raise my restless soul when your wild scenes were near!

Sure ye who viewless range those prospects blest,
  And swiftly glance o'er many a heath-clad hill—
Sure ye oft animate the glowing breast,
  And often warm with many a mystic thrill
  The pure poetic fancy !——Oh ! deign still
Those high, those speechless pleasures to renew,
  Let Memory trace each scene with faithful skill,
And let Imagination's fervour true,
With no dim tints recal each magic mountain-view.

In all the tedious intercourse of life,
  Say, is there aught of bliss sublime and high?
Amid the fluttering world's unmeaning strife,
  Say, is there aught to sooth or satisfy
  The soul aspiring to her kindred sky?——
No !—Nature, thou alone canst boast the power
  To reillume the melancholy eye—
Cheer the dejection of the restless hour,
Or bid advent'rous thought to trackless regions tower.

If thou, perchance, hast ever felt the smart
  Of unrequited friendship, go and soothe,
In independence wild, thy wearied heart!——
  The charm of solitary pleasures prove,

Ye who the world's cold scorn may sometimes move
To curse mankind!—and ye that doubt and fear,
Oh! see how Nature beams with boundless love!—
The God of Nature shall instruct you there,
All rapture to the heart, all music to the ear.

And you ye Cambrian hills and valleys sweet,—
You gave such pleasure to a wearied mind,
You fill'd a heart, which thought all joy deceit,
With unfeign'd rapture, and with peace refin'd.
Thanks to your charms and glories unconfin'd!
Thanks to that God who gave a heart to feel!
And may your rude scenes with an influence kind
Continue long the wound of care to heal,
And warm afresh with joy, Affliction's bosom chill!

And you, ye shadowy spirits, that unseen
All wildly glance those fabled scenes among,
Whose solemn voices, oft Night's conscious queen
Salute with murmur sweet, and mystic song;

May you for him that raptur'd roves along,
Or climbs some rock whose fork'd peak cleaves the sky,
If chance the powers of verse to him belong,
Bid dreams of hallow'd import flutter by,
And purge from mortal film, his half-enlighten'd eye!

ODE

TO DERWENTWATER, CUMBERLAND.

August, 1794.

WILD scenes! tho' absent from my sight,
Remembrance often views your wakeful charm:
She cherishes with fond delight
The enthusiastic thrill, the feeling warm,
The glow poetic, and the wild alarm,
That ever wait, enchanting scenes! on you.
She often sees your hanging wood
Wave on the mountain's brow,
And kens your mild reflecting flood
Sleep in the vale below,
With feelings keenly true;——

She views the mountain torrent white with foam,
As its big mass darts wildly from on high;
While conscious shades that shed an awful gloom,
From the rude glare of Day's unwelcome eye
Shroud many a fairy form that loves to hover nigh.
Majestic views!
What trembling effort of my votive muse,
May dare to hail
Shades where SUBLIMITY shall ever dwell?
Where oft SHE points the melancholy rock,
To make it frown more dread;
And bids the beetling crag more proudly mock
The embrio storm that hovers round its head.
While SHE, of rapturous thought the *Magic Queen*,
Wakes every *ruder grace*,
BEAUTY, *more lovely* in an awful scene,
Adorns of nature the *expressive face*
With many a *sweeter charm*,
And hues divinely warm,——
Bids the torrent as it flows
In the vale below repose,

Bids the glowing car of day
Shed a soft attemper'd ray,
Gives the groves a fresher green
Where mild zephyr sails serene.
BEAUTY calms the liquid lake,
And ever bids it sweetly take
The margin rock, and each time-hallow'd wood,
Each mountain wildly high, sublimely rude,
With soft reflected grace in its reposing flood.

Methinks I see in native charm attir'd
All the bright forms of KESWICK's happy vale:
Methinks I see the scene, which oft inspir'd
The glow of Genius, and the Muses' tale.
DERWENT! I view thy lake of clearest glass,
Which Nature decks in beauty all thine own—
The liquid lustre of its level face
Where the gay pinnace glitters to the sun.
"I feel the balmy gales that blow,"
Its surface brightly clear along;
And now I hear them murmur low,
The lightly trembling woods among.
The cluster'd isles that scarcely peep
From the blue bosom of the deep,

Which loves their grassy sides to lave,
Now meet excursive Fancy's eye,
And with a sweet diversity
Break the wide level of the rippling wave.
Ah! as thy varying scene I mark,
What cloud-clad rocks, what mountains huge appear:
Here WALLOW frowns, with SKIDDAW in its rear,
A vast stupendous mass! and, hark!
Methinks I seem in Fancy's dream to hear
A deep majestic sound
From yon rude rocks rebound,
Where wild woods ever wave 'mid fragments drear.
On breezes borne, that fan the day,
Now louder, and now louder roars
The hollow sound on KESWIC's shores,
As on I urge my way.——
'Till led by Fancy to the impending shade,
O'ercanopied by melancholy rocks,
LODORE is seen to thunder thro' the glade,
And from the appalling steep with fearful shocks

To urge the fragment thro' the opening air,
Big with impending fate and deep despair
To Him, the unlucky wight, that wont to wander
near.

Tremendous flood!
Which flingst thy foam on many a fragment
rude;
And bid'st the forest quake
And listening nature shake,
As down thou tumblest 'mid the humid wood.
For thee, her showers may summer send,
And still replenish every spring!
For thee, the lone Enthusiast's friend
Her wildest storms may winter bring!
May many a mountain torrent mix with thine,
And seek thy favourite haunt, sublimity divine!

What are the graces of the polish'd scene
Where the wild form of Nature's sought in vain,
Where artificial elegance is seen
A supplement to Beauty's beamy train!
What, when compar'd to LODORE's shade!——
Here wanton Nature's boundless grace,
Fancy, sweet visionary maid,
Is often fondly seen to trace.

Here all the viewless forms that still
Awake the enthusiastic thrill;
Here fairy phantoms that dispense
Rapture to sublimated sense,
Impart their highest influence——
There, Dulness leaning on some statue near
(Her emblem meet) wears out the insipid year,
And talks of Nature with an ideot joy
While Nature, absent maid, ne'er blest her vacant eye.

ELEGY

ON LEAVING EXMOUTH.

August, 1794.

FAREWEL, sweet scenes familiar to mine eyes,
  Oft have I mark'd you with a transport blest;
Tho' now no more for me your charms shall rise,
  Or give my soul a transitory rest.

Farewel, thou blue and ever restless main,
  On whose clear breast yon bright orb sheds his ray;
While from the vault above with boundless reign,
  He proudly flames, the exulting LORD of day.

Farewel, ye little skiffs that calmly scud
  With trembling white sail to each zephyr true
Along the wide and undulating flood;
  Sweet fairy objects of a fairy view!

And you, ye proud majestic ships, that glide
With swelling canvas, and with pennants gay,
Stately and slow along the obedient tide,
No more for me ye plow your wat'ry way!

Farewel, the glowing sigh, the swelling thought,
The throb mysterious, and the tear so sweet;
Farewel, the joys that inspiration brought,
And Nature wild, in Solitude's retreat.

I haste, alas! from this unruffled main,
I haste from shores where sighs the placid wave,
To scenes of moral misery and pain,
The billowy storms of busy life to brave.

Feelings of peace, ye melting thoughts, I go,
I go, with *you* to never more sojourn!
Day-dreams of sweet imaginary woe,
I quit your charms *realities* to mourn!

THE

MELANCHOLY MAN.

1795.

I.

WHAT means this tumult of thy soul—
  Those feelings words could ne'er define—
Those languid eyes that vacant roll—
  Those cherish'd thoughts that inly pine?
    Why dost thou wildly love to stray
    Where dimly gleams the doubtful day,
And all-unconscious muse with pensive pace?
    Or why in lorn dejected mood
    Bend o'er the melancholy flood,
And with unmeaning gaze the heedless current
      trace?

II.

Ah! why, thou poor, distracted thing!
  Those muttered accents, broken, low;
Those visionary tears that spring
    From unintelligible woe?

Why does the rose that deck'd thy cheek
Pal'd o'er with care, no more bespeak
The lovely flush of life's luxuriant morn?
Or o'er thy shrunk, ambiguous face,
Bereft of youth's untutor'd grace,
Thy locks all wildly hang, neglected and forlorn?

III.

Should eve's meek star with paly eye
Peep lonely o'er the mountain's head,
While on the blue translucent sky
Some feathery clouds are lightly spread;
Why wilt thou seek the rushy heath,
And listen as the gale's low breath
Murmurs forlorn the moss-clad waste along?
When from the white-thorn's blossom'd spray
The red-breast sings his latest lay,
Why with bent downcast brows stand list'ning to the song?

IV.

Why does the tear unbidden start,
And why those sighs that wildly swell?
Why flutters thy tumultuous heart,
Thy looks unspoken feelings tell,

If chance beneath thy devious feet
Thou seest the lover's last retreat,
The cold and unblest grave of pale despair?
Why dost thou drop a feeling tear
Upon the flowret lurking near,
And bid it ever droop, a meek memento, there?

V.

Why with unwonted longings yearn
O'er this, the last resource of man,
And with mysterious envy turn
Thy only shelter, Worth! to scan?
Why dost thou, to Affliction true,
When April sheds her chilly dew,
Bend o'er the spot, ere peeps the weeping day?
When Eve's unrealizing gleam
Confounds the gaze in visual dream,
Why dost thou love to hear the curfew die away?

VI.

Where (monument of past delight,
And truer type of joy's brief reign)
The RUIN gleams, and dim Affright
Shivers the homeward-plodding swain;
Why dost thou love alone to tread
Fragments with ivy overspread,

And mark the grey-tower half enshrin'd in trees;
Or listen, as in vaults beneath
From viewless forms deep murmurs breathe,
And sighs on mossy walls the melancholy breeze?

VII.

Why dost thou loiter on the beach
Where rippling dies the bright-blue wave,
And often with fantastic speech
To the deaf ocean idly rave?
Why dost thou bid the billow bear
Thy frame unnerv'd by fancied care
To realms more pure, where genial souls inspire?
Why dost thou view the little skiff,
Which flutters near the frowning cliff,
With many an "aching wish" and impotent desire?

VIII.

When in the crowded walks of men,
'Mid festive scenes thou'rt doom'd to mix,
Why on some distant lonely glen
Thine ill-attuned spirit fix?
Why dost thou spurn alluring mirth,
And bend unconscious to the earth,

Mute and unknowing, absent and unknown?
Why dost thou frown on every sport,
And curse indignant those that court
The motley phantom Joy, on Folly's tinsel throne?

IX.

And wherefore, when the trump of fame
Inflames the soul to glory's deed,
Such deed with cynic sternness blame,
And quaintly mock th' ephemeral meed?
Why now with misanthropic eye
The springs of action keenly try
Through the pure medium of eternal truth?
Now rais'd above this nether sphere
A mere spectator, judge severe,
Nor chill'd by fears of age, nor warm'd by hopes of youth?

X.

Is it because each tie is gone
That bound thee to this fragile state?
Because thou'rt left forlorn, alone,
No friend to love!—no foe to hate?
Has keen affection often brought
The pleasures of a tender thought,

And is such thought for ever now bereft?
Say, hast thou felt an ardent flame
Which not eternity could tame,
And are its joys expir'd, and all its vigour left?

XI.

Has fancy to thy madden'd gaze
Display'd th' elysian dells of bliss?
Say, did her secret wonders raise
A wish for happier worlds than this?
And is the wanton faery flown,
And left thee chill'd to conscious stone,
At this cold prospect of unmeaning care?
And is Hope's lustre fled afar,
Nor haply from her pilot star
Gleams one congenial ray, repellent of despair?

XII.

Is it that thou didst love mankind
With ardour warm as angels feel;
And did they spurn thy generous mind,
And wanton wound—nor wish to heal?
—If causes dark as these have wrought
The puzzling wreck of splendid thought,

I weep!—and meekly turn from this low earth;
Yet sometimes muse, why miscreants bloom,
While Sorrow's bleak untimely gloom
Blights, ere his powers expand, the trembling child of Worth!

LINES

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

1795.

THE fluttering gale has sunk to rest,
  The sloping sun-beams feebly glow,
Such zephyrs breathe as sooth the breast,
  Such radiance pours as softens woe.

The languid notes of lonesome bird,
  From yonder coppice sweetly wind;
And thro' the scene are faintly heard
  Sounds that are silence to the mind.

As slow my devious feet advance
  Thro' Eve's unrealizing gloom,
Mine eyes peruse with eager glance
  An Infant's solitary tomb.

'Tis simple! yet the green sod here
  That seems to court no stranger's eye,
Than marble claims a tenderer tear,
  Than sculpture moves a softer sigh!

A lonely primrose lifts its head,
  And here and there pale violets peep;
And, if no venal tears are shed,
  The dews from many a daisy weep.

And Pity here is often seen
  To prompt the nameless pilgrim's sighs,
For Pity loves to haunt the scene
  Where Grief is stript of Art's disguise.

I mark'd the spot!—and felt my soul
  Enwrapp'd in Sorrow's softest mood;
The pensive shade that o'er me stole,
  It could not lightly be withstood.

I mark'd the spot—and thought how soon
  Each earthly blessing is resign'd!
E'en then I saw life's dearest boon
  Consign'd to dust—to death consign'd!

And while a parent's hopes and fears,
  To fabling Fancy forceful swell;
And while a parent's anxious tears,——
  These accents negligently fell:—

" Thou little tenant of the grave,
" Sleep on, untouch'd by mortal strife,
" Unknown the cares that man must brave,
" The ills, that only end with life!

" Of eager hope, unconscious thou,
" Unconscious thou of grief's extreme:
" To thee——an *everlasting now!*
" To thee—a sleep without a dream!

" Sleep on, poor child!—a fellow worm,
" Who's prov'd for thee life's joy and care,
" Would fain forego the useless term,
" He's tasted life——and death's his prayer.

" To thee, poor child! ere grief is brought
" To vex thy soul, oblivion's given!——
" Oh! if the grave could boast of *thought,*
" *That thought would make the grave——a*
" *heaven!*"

Farewell, sweet spot! my soul I feel
Entranc'd in sorrow's softest mood;
These pensive shades that o'er me steal,
They shall not lightly be withstood.

STANZAS,

WRITTEN BY ULSWATER, CUMBERLAND.

May, 1795.

FAIR lake, I mark thine ample tide,
  Thy crisped surface clear and blue;
I mark the groves that fringe thy side
  Reflected in thy mirror true.

I mark yon grey rocks rudely wild,
  That nod stupendous o'er the vale;
I feel the breezes warm and mild,
  That haste to fill yon silken sail.

I see the transient shadow pass
  Along thy variegated hills;
And while they lave the margin grass,
  I hear thy sweetly murmuring rills.

I hear the mellow-melting horn,
  While Echo swells each languid close;
On every breeze is music borne!——
  On every object beauty glows!

Welcome the wild tumultuous thrill!
  Hail, child of Nature, fond alarm!
To me this sigh is pleasing still,
  To me this tear has many a charm.

But yet I wish—thou hov'ring sigh,
  But yet I wish—thou glowing tear,
I wish—and yet I scarce know why——
  Sophia, when you rise, were near.

ADDRESS

TO THE GENIUS OF SHAKSPEARE.

1795.

When first thine eyes beheld the light,
And Nature bursting on thy sight
Pour'd on thy beating heart a kindred day;
Genius, the fire-eyed Child of Fame!
Circled thy brows with mystic flame,
And warm with hope, pronounced this prophet-lay.

Thee, darling Boy! I give to know
Each viewless source of Joy and Woe,
For thee my vivid visions shall unfold:
Each form, that freezes sense to stone,
Each phantom of the world unknown,
Shall flit before thine eyes, and waken thoughts untold.

The bent of purpose unavow'd;
Of Hopes and Fears the wildering crowd;
The incongruous train of wishes undefin'd;
Shall all be subjected to thee!
The excess of Bliss and Agony
Shall oft alternate seize thy high-attemper'd mind.

Oft o'er the woody summer vale
When Evening breathes her balmy gale,
Oft by the wild brook's margin shalt thou rove;
When just above the western line
The clouds with richer radiance shine,
Yellowing the dark tops of the mountain-grove.

There Love's warm hopes thy breast shall fill,
For Nature's charms with kindliest skill
Prepare for Love's delicious extacy;
Thy prostrate mind shall sink subdued,
While in a strange fantastic mood,
The wild power fires thy veins, and mantles in thine eye!

For know where'er my influence dwells,
Each selfish interest it expels,

And wakes each latent energy of soul;
Indifference, of the marble mien,
Shall ne'er with lazy spells be seen,
To quench th' immortal wish, that aims perfection's goal.

There shalt thou burst, whate'er it be
That manacles mortality,
And range thro' scenes by fleshly feet untrod;
And Inspiration to thine eye
Shall bid futurity be nigh,
And with mysterious power approximate to God.

CHRISTMAS.

1796.

THIS is the time when every vacant breast
Expands with simplest mirth. Mem'ry, thou nurse
Of mingled feeling, trace the former years,
And count each jolly festival!

My heart
Scarce knew to feel, ere it more lively beat,
When I beheld the evergreen enwreathe
The ice-emblazon'd lattice; or aloft,
Shadowing the comely flitch, that jovial branch
Beneath whose licens'd shade the honest swain
Imprints the kiss unblam'd: and even now
Something like joy steals to my quicken'd pulse
When Friends bid "merry Christmas."

Oh! 'tis good
To hear the voice of hospitality;
To feel the hearty grasp of love, to quit
For a brief interval the forms and pressures
Of life's tame intercourse.

And now I glean
The remnants that I may of parted joys
To deck this forlorn year, stealing from hours
Long past and flush with jollity.

There is a time
When first sensation paints the burning cheek,
Fills the moist eye, and quickens the keen pulse,
That mystic meanings half conceiv'd invest
The simplest forms, and all doth speak, all lives
To the eager heart! At such a time to me
Thou cam'st, dear holiday! Thy twilight glooms
Mysterious thoughts awaken'd, and I mus'd
As if possest, yea felt as I had known
The dawn of inspiration. Then the days
Were sanctified by feeling, all around
Of an indwelling presence darkly spake.
Silence had borrow'd sounds to cheat the soul!
And, to the toys of life, the teeming brain,
Impregning them with its own character,
Gave preternatural import; the dull face
Was eloquent, and e'en the idle air
Most potent shapes, varying and yet the same,
Substantially express'd.

But soon my heart,
Unsatisfied with blissful shadows, felt

Achings of vacancy, and own'd the throb
Of undefin'd desire, while lays of love
Firstling and wild stole to my trem'lous tongue.
To me thy rites were mock'ry then, thy glee
Of little worth. More pleas'd I trod the waste
Sear'd with the sleety wind, and drank its blast;
Deeming thy dreary shapes most strangely sweet,
Mist-shrouded winter! In mute loneliness
I wore away the day which others hail'd
So cheerily, still usher'd in with chaunt
Of carol, and the merry ringer's peal,
Most musical to the good man that wakes
And praises God in gladness.

But soon fled
The dreams of love fantastic! Still the Friend,
The Friend, the wild roam o'er the drifted snows
Remain unsung! Then when the wintry view
Objectless, mist-hidden, or in uncouth forms
Prank'd by the arrowy flake might aptly yield
New stores to shaping phantasy, I rov'd
With him my lov'd companion! Oh, 'twas sweet;
Ye who have known the swell that heaves the
breast
Pregnant with loftiest poesy, declare
Is aught more soothing to the charmed soul
Than friendship's glow, the independent dream

Gathering when all the frivolous shews are fled
Of artificial life; when the wild step
Boundeth on wide existence, unbeheld,
Uncheck'd, and the heart fashioneth its hope
In Nature's school, while Nature bursts around,
Nor Man her spoiler meddles in the scene!
Farewell, dear day, much hath it sooth'd my heart
To chaunt thy frail memorial.

Now advance
The darkening years, and I do sojourn, home!
From thee afar. Where the broad-bosom'd hills,
Swept by perpetual clouds, of Scotland, rise,
Me fate compels to tarry.

Ditty quaint
Or custom'd carol, there my vacant ear
Ne'er blest! I thought of home and happier days!
And as I thought, my vexed spirit blam'd
That austere race, who, mindless of the glee
Of good old festival, coldly forbade
Th' observance which of mortal life relieves
The languid sameness, seeming too to bring
Sanction from hoar antiquity and years
Long past!

For me, a plain and simple man,
I rev'rence my forefathers, and would hold
Their pious ord'nance sacred! Much I hate
The coxcomb innovator, who would raze
The deeds of other times! Most sweet to me
These chroniclers of life; oft round them twine
Dear recollections of the past, the sum
Of all those comforts which the poor heart feels
While struggling here, bearing with holy care
Its little stock of intermediate joy,
To bless the circle of domestic love.
And now farewell! Thus former years have fed
My retrospective lays! Sad barrenness
Scowls o'er the present time! No boyish sports,
No youthful dreams, or hopes fantastic, now
Endear thy festival! Rapture is fled,
And all that nourish'd high poetic thought
Vanish'd afar; yet Resignation meek
Chastens past pleasure with her evening hues,
And lends a sober charm, mild as the shade
Mantling the scene, which glisten'd late beneath
Day's purple radiance, when grey twilight falls
Soft harmonizing. Rich variety
Pales to a sadden'd sameness!

Nor can I
Forget what I have lost since last I hail'd

Thy jolly tide! The aged Friend is dead!
The Friend who mingled in my boyish sports!
The Friend who solac'd my eccentric heart!
The Friend by whose mild suffrage unimpell'd
I ne'er could taste of joy!—Yes, She is dead!
So be it! Yet 'tis hard to smile, and know
So sad a loss! I bend before my God,
And, silent at the past, commune henceforth
Of days in store, "of righteousness to come,"
Of faith, of hope, and of a better world!

THE WOODMAN.

Written July, 1797.

Ah! wherefore that gibbet which dismally rocks,
As the gale of the hill moans profound;
While the fair spreading valley, now whitened with flocks,
Now with tufted slopes varied, and villages, mocks
The cold heathy mountains around?

There suffered poor Harry, the generous and bold!
The hamlet his virtues well knew;
His the free grace of youth; his eye always told
The feelings of nature; his looks never cold,
When they promis'd the most were most true.

And he loved: nor his loyal affection to bless
The maiden did ever delay:
His tongue's mellow music would sweetly express,
And his eyes melting gaze, and a timid caress,
That his thrilled heart was rapturously gay.

And often the sweets of a virtuous embrace,
If at evening he anxiously hied,
All faint from the copse, would his weariness chase,
In a moment enlighten his moist harass'd face
With a smile of inspirited pride.

Then around the trim hearth he the eve would beguile,
Reclined on the breast of his maid;
Having wooed her to sing, he would watch all the while,
How in her soft lip's inexpressible smile,
Love's witcheries furtively played.

And when the green mead and the full-foliaged spray
Refresh the glad eye, they would roam;
And, twining their arms, would exultingly say,
That, ere the leaves fell, at the close of the day,
They, wedded, should hie to *one home*.

Ah, bootless the thought! The prospect, though sweet,
Was frail as the tints of the sky,
When the day's radiance fades, and the traveller to cheat,
A gleam riseth beauteous, most vivid and fleet,
For the night-storm is brooding on high.

'Twas summer;—and sultry and parching noontide,
The woodman, with labour oppressed,
The ragings of thirst would relieve;—by the side
Of his path, on a sign, he unluckily spied
All the trophies of Bacchus confessed.

Might ever his breast's irresistible throe
To the o'ertakings of pleasure invite;
He quaffs, till with passion his cheeks deeply glow,
Life's full tides through his veins more tumultuously flow;—
His heart shaped untasted delight!

And now he must go to the green coppice shade;
While o'ercharged with delirious fire,
And passionate impulse, he quickly surveyed
Where a female half-clad was alluringly laid;
And he seized her with maddened desire.

'Twas a poor wandering idiot, diffused in the sun,
Who was basking, that there met his eye:
His good angel forsook him!—Confounded, undone,
He for ever the cause of his ruin would shun,
And wished at that moment to die.

No more on his Mary the wretched youth thought,
Or thinking, he started convulsed!
He would give at that hour the whole world to have bought
The bliss which her image had formerly brought,
Ere conscience that image repulsed.

And though he still loved, yet his love mix'd with shame,
Was bitter as once it was sweet,
When the innocent maiden was near him, the flame
Of tremulous agony shot through his frame,
Nor her look dared he ever to meet.

Now Harry's a father. The crazed outcast sent
A poor babe to his cot: then he cried,
"My arm is my all; will not Justice relent?
"And will nothing but twenty gold pieces prevent
"The idiot from being my bride?"

Distracted at leaving the maid of his love,
  And loathing the outcast to wed;—
All agonized;—hopeless;—too poor to remove
The evils that threaten, no longer he strove,
  But to prison was cruelly led.

And long he persisted; but, stiffened with cold,
  And consumed both by hunger and thirst,—
He at last to his tyrants his happiness sold,
The idiot did wed, and consented to fold
  To his heart, what it secretly cursed.

And then did he think, till 'twas madness to think,
  On the raptures his Mary had given;
And oft at the sight his poor senses would sink,
When this ungifted wretch made him keenlier shrink
  From the raptures of forfeited heaven.

'Twas a cold wintry season, the night it was dark,
  And long was the eve;—on his cheek,
While his eye brooded vacantly o'er the pale spark,
As it died on the hearth, the beholder might mark
  Those workings that bid the heart break.

He thought on the maid; on the choice of his
youth;
He thought on the days that were flown;
He painted with feelings more vivid than truth
The raptures that wonted his bosom to sooth,
When he counted that Maiden his own.

And he dwelt on her look, on her soft melting
gaze,
On the roll of her languishing eye;
And he felt all the throbs of her willing embrace,
And recalled the warm touch of her soft melting
face,
And heard the inarticulate sigh.

Then he looked on his mate, and she seem'd to
his view
A fiend that tormented his soul!
He lifted his hand; and, oh God! ere he knew
The extent of his crime, the poor victim he slew,
'Twas an impulse he might not control!

For their prey now the blood-hunters anxiously
wait,
The unfortunate woodman is bound!
Once more he beholds the heavy hinged gate
Of the prison; the fetters with torturing weight
Again bend him down to the ground.

There agonized, hopeless, remorseful, he lies,
With passions diseasedly rife;—
Disarmed of a conscience that comfort supplies,
With the frenzies of madness he impiously tries
To exhaust the vexed remnants of life.

He is sentenc'd to die; nor to him was the doom
With regret or reluctancy fraught;—
His misery mocks all the threats of the tomb,
And he earnestly prays that the moment may come,
The sabbath of agonized thought.

The day is appointed; slow moves on the throng,
That would glut their foul gaze with his woes;
It trampleth the vale, then windeth along
That desolate hill, whose wild thickets among
A gibbet all fearfully rose.

The scaffold he mounts; the moment is near,
When, echoing far through the crowd,
A shriek of wild agony thrills on his ear,
Oh God!—a poor maniac!—his Mary is here—
She rushes along screaming loud.—

Then death it was horror;—the past was forgot—
From her visage he fearfully shrunk:—
One embrace she implor'd, then quick to the spot
The fear-winged Mary distractedly shot,
On the breast of her lover she sunk.

She was senseless; her pale cheek was worn to the bone,
To the breeze floated wildly her hair;
And he glued to his breast, with a horrible groan,
The love of his youth; and his eyes fixed as stone,
At that moment did deathfully glare.

The pang it is passed;—for the minions of law
Asunder these wretched ones tore;
The cord round his neck they inhumanly draw,
Mary's eyes, tho' half clos'd, the dire spectacle saw,
Nor her senses could mortal restore.

The Circumstances related in the following Lines fell under the Author's notice, and are detailed without any poetical exaggeration.

1797.

TURN not thy dim eyes to the stormy sea,
Thou wretched mourner! for thy Child is gone;
Gone, never to return! Goaded by ills,
Which poor mortality may not endure,
Unshrinking, he hath left his native land,
His native home, all the dear charities
Of brother, son, and friend! and more than these,
The inexplicable lingerings which endear
To the susceptible breast the scenes where first
It learn'd to feel, where young sensation gave
Mysterious import to the characters
Of Nature's volume! But he may not go
Without some sad memorial from the heart
Which knew him best, the heart which sadly mark'd
His full soul, and his vigorous spirit sink
Unmechaniz'd by pain!

And surely thou,
Deserted mother! for a while shalt feel
Some mingled solacings of gloomy joy,
When I relate his wrongs whom thou dost weep,
Yet living, lost for ever.

When a child,
His father died, and died with ear which long
Had drunk the pois'nous tale of calumny.
Five infants totter'd round the widow'd mother,
And he who should have screen'd them, ere he went
To the cold grave; them, and their feeble parent,
With alienated love had left his all
In stranger hands; had listen'd to a lie
Which robb'd their mother of a taintless name;
And the *poor tremblers*, e'en on life's hard verge,
Knew not a father's kind protection; eat,
Though affluence might have blest them, the scant meal
Uncertain; while their mother, with a heart
Torn, and misgiving of the future dole
Reluctantly supplied, hung o'er her babes
With sorrows heighten'd by a cruel sense
Of what she once had been, with agony

And unexpress'd despair. Meanwhile the fiends,
Who fram'd with slandering tongue the deadly tale,
That numb'd the fibres of the dying man,
E'en till he knew not pity, till he lost
All fleshly yearnings,—they did gorge their prey,
And hug their hidden treasure!

Scarce arriv'd
At manhood, soon as *He** began to feel,
He felt what injury and injustice are,
And bitter disappointment. He no friend
Possess'd; yet had a bosom that might own
All the varieties of social joy,
From meekest pity to the expansive swell
Of warm benevolence; from passion's throe,
To the holier interchange of kindred souls!
How has he struggled with the instinctive love
That led him to embrace his fellow men,
And bind them to his breast! I only knew
The ruins of his mind; yet have I seen
The smother'd tear for passing wretchedness!
I've seen the faint flush, and the pulse of pity,

* The subject of the tale; whose name the Author has purposely omitted.

Working on his poor cheek, e'en while he forc'd
The unnatural laugh of hard indifference
To cope with nature's pleadings! Oh, my God!
I have e'en heard him, with most strange perversion,
Brag that weak man was fashion'd by his Maker
To live a lonely, uncompanion'd thing;
That he was self-sufficient; that the smile
Of sweet affection was a very cheat,
And love's best energies impertinence:
While ever on his favourite household dog
He look'd such meanings of a hollow heart,
His rebel eye express'd such sad misgivings,
That all he spake fell flat upon the ear,
Self-contradicted.

With some scanty wrecks,
Snatch'd from his father's stores, he struggled long
To brave the world! enrolling his fair name
With those who seek, by jostling with mankind,
To gain some footing on this wretched earth.
But he, the adventurer's wild spontaneous life
Leading, with ardour ever prompt to act
The heart's quick impulses, had not (poor man)
Been school'd in all the subtleties of fraud;

In that nice lore of systematic lies,
Which commerce, unrelenting task-master,
Exacts from those who'd fatten on her smiles!
His manly reason could not tamely brook
To shrink and tremble, and annihilate
Its noblest energies, at the curst saws
Of mammon's sons—No; he had trod too long
His mortal path unbending and erect!
As well they may, in this world's difficult passage,
Who know not cunning's complicated schemes.
He fell, where each half-fashioned unripe knave
Is shuffled off by a more perfect villain.
His prospects blasted, his fair name traduc'd,
His very milk of human kindness turn'd
To pois'nous gall; distracted by the tears
Of his poor mother, and the sobs and prayers
Of brothers, sisters, who look'd up to him
For daily bread, he left his native land,
And with a mind resolved to endure
Through future life a most unnatural blank,
Sail'd o'er the element!

I saw him go
He said not aught that to the standers by
Betray'd a suffering one; but he did look!

Oh God! he look'd pale, stiff as a sear'd oak
Blanch'd by the lightning; and mute vacancy
Sat on his face, as no soul dwelt within!
He went; nor human ear hath heard of him!
Nor human tongue made mention of his name!
Oft I pass by his dwelling, vacant now;
And at such times I almost curse a world
That moulds to guilt the energetic soul
Of loftiest promise; and for saintly worth
Invents a discipline which ends in ruin!

LONDON.

In solitude
What happiness!—Who can enjoy alone?
Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?
MILTON.

1798.

THOU first of human feelings, social love!
I must obey thy powerful sympathies,
E'en though I've often found that those my heart
Most priz'd, were creatures of its warm desires,
Rather than aught which other men less prone
To affections swift, transforming quality,
Might worthy deem or excellent!

Thy scenes,
Thy tainted scenes, proud city, now detain
My restless feet. 'Twill sooth a vacant hour
To trace what dim inexplicable links
Of hidden nature have inclin'd my soul
To love what heretofore it most abhorr'd.

When first a little one I mark'd far off
The wreathed smoke that capp'd thy palaces :
Oh what a joyous fluttering of the heart,
Oh what exulting hopes were mine! Methought,
Within thy walls there must be somewhat strange,
Surpassing greatly any wondrous dream,
Of fairy grandeur, which my childhood lov'd.
And when I heard the busy hum of men,
And saw the passing crowd in endless ranks,
The many-colour'd equipage, and steeds
Gaily caparison'd; it seem'd to me
As though all living things were centered here.
But other feelings soon transformed these shews
To meerest emptiness, e'en till my soul
Would sicken at their presence; for I've sought
To cherish quiet musings, and disdain'd
The idle forms which play upon the sense,
Yet give the heart no comfortable thoughts.
Yes, I have sought the solitary walk,
Where I might number every absent friend,
And give a tear to each: I've nurs'd my soul
With strangest contemplation, till it wore
A sad and lonely character, untouch'd
By th' operation of external shapes.
Yet, London, now thou'rt pleasant—'tis e'en so!
For I am sick of hopes that stand aloof

From common sympathy; for I am sick
Of pampering delicate exclusive loves,
And silly dreams of rapture, that would pull
The shrinking hand from every honest grasp,
The shrinking heart from every honest pledge,
Not trickt in gracefulness poetical!
Sometimes, 'tis true, when I have pac'd the haunts
Of crowded occupation, I have felt
A sad repression, looking all around,
Nor catching one known face amid the throng,
That answer'd mine with cordial pleasantness.
I've often thought upon some absent friend,
E'en till an assur'd hope that he was nigh
Has made me lift my head, and stretch my arm,
To gaze upon the form, and grasp the hand,
Of him who lived in my wayward dream.
And I have look'd, and all has been to me
A crowded desolation! Not one being,
'Mid that incessant and perturbed throng,
Dreamt of *my* hopes or fears! Then have I pac'd
With breathless eagerness; and if an eye
Has met my gaze, wherein some trace remote
Lived of one on whom my heart has lean'd,
A gentle thrilling of awaken'd love
Has warm'd my breast, and haply kindled there

A dream of parted days, that so my feet,
It seem'd to me, mov'd not in solitude.
Thus can the heart, by its strange agency,
Extract divine emotion from the scene
Most barren and uncouth; which images
To *him who cannot love,*—who never felt
That ever active warmth commingling still
Its own existence with all present things,—
Nought beside forms, and bodily substances.

Methinks he acts the purposes of life,
And fills the measure of his destiny
With best approved wisdom, who retires
To some majestic solitude; his mind
Rais'd by those visions of eternal love,
The rock, the vale, the forest, and the lake,
The sky, the sea, and everlasting hills.
He best performs the purposes of life,
And fills the measure of his destiny,
Who holds high converse with the present God
(Not mystically meant), and feels him ever
Made manifest to his transfigur'd soul.
But few there are who know to prize such bliss;
And he who thus would raise his mortal being,
Must shake weak nature off, and be content
To live a lonely uncompanion'd thing,

Exil'd from human loves and sympathies.
Therefore the city must detain *my* feet;
For I would sometimes gaze upon a face
That smiles on me, and speaks intelligibly
Of one that answers all my hopes and fears.
Nor is to me the sentiment of life
Less acceptable, when I contemplate
Numberless living and progressive beings,
Acting the infinite varieties
Of this miraculous scene. For though the dim
And inharmonious ministrations here,
Of heavenly wisdom, may confound the sense,
The partial sense of man, *my soul* is glad;
Trusting that all, yea every* living thing,
Shall understand, in the appointed time,
And praise the inwoven mystery† of sin;
Losing each hope and each propellent fear
In perfect bliss; and "God be all in all!"

* See Hartley "On the final Happiness of all Mankind."

† "For the *mystery of iniquity* doth already work."
St. Paul to Timothy.

LINES

TO

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN.

I AM happy in being able to offer this imperfect tribute to the memory of a woman, whose undeserved sufferings have excited my indignation and pity; and whose virtues, both of heart and mind, my warmest esteem.

This will not be deemed a parasitical profession, when I avow a complete dissent from Mrs. Godwin with regard to almost all her moral speculations.

Her posthumous works, so far from convincing me that "the misery and oppression peculiar to women arise out of the partial laws and institutions of society,"* appear little less throughout than an indirect panegyric on the institutions she wishes to abolish. She (with all other great

* See Posthumous Works, vol. ii. p. 166.

minds) owed her degree of intellectualization to the very restraints on the passions which she was aiming to annihilate; and the source of the miseries she complained of must rather be sought for in the brute turbulencies of human nature, than in the operation of any laws, conventional or positive.

However, the heart and upright dignity of this excellent woman have much interested me. I never quarrel with opinions; and I fervently wish that the expression of my admiration were more worthy of its object.

"On examining my heart, I find that it is so constituted, I cannot live without some particular affection. I am afraid, not without a passion; and I feel the want of it more in society than in solitude."

Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin's Letters, vol. i. p. 178.

1798.

MARY, I've trod the turf beneath whose damp
And dark green coverture thou liest! 'Twas strange!
And somewhat most like madness shot athwart
The incredulous mind, when I bethought myself
That there so many earnest hopes and fears,

So many warm desires, and lofty thoughts,
Affections imitating, in their wide
And boundless aim, heaven's universal love,
Lay cold and silent! Listening to the breeze,
That scarcely murmur'd thro' the misty air,
And looking on the white and solemn clouds,
(The only things whose motion spake of life)
I almost counted to have heard thy voice,
And seen thy shadowy shape; for my full heart
(Tho' to my mortal sense thou ne'er wert known)
Had bodied all thy mental attributes
In th' unintelligent and vacant space.

MARY, thou sleep'st not there!—'Twas but a trance,
An idle trance, that led my wayward thought
To seek a more especial intercourse
With thy pure spirit on the senseless sod,
Where what was thine, not *thou*, lies sepulchred.
Life is a dream! and death a dream to those
Who gaze upon the dead: to those who die
'Tis the withdrawing of a lower scene
For one more real, pure, and infinite!

Amid the trials of this difficult world,
Surely none press so sorely on the heart

As disappointed loves, and impulses
(Mingling the lonely insulated soul
With all surrounding and external things)
Sever'd from nature's destined sympathies!
This was thy lot on earth!—Yet think not thou,
Man of the world, to triumph here o'er those,
Whose separate and immortalized spirits
Spoil them for life's pernicious intercourse.
This is the school of minds; and every wish,
Drawn from the earthly part, shall raise the being,
And fit it for a wider range, whene'er
The twofold ministry of flesh and spirit
Hath done its troubled business. Therefore thou,
Though here tormented, shalt in better worlds
Be greatly comforted!

I laugh at those
Who blame that upright singleness of soul,
Which ever shap'd the accents of thy tongue!
Look to yourselves, pedantic censurers!
Examine well within; for much, I fear,
Ye would but ill endure the scrutiny
That only gives to her a nobler rank
'Mid beings compos'd of heart and intellect.
In this fantastic scene each one assumes

A borrow'd character, and all agree
To seem a something, which in his secret thought
Each knows he is not; which the God of nature
Ne'er made, or meant a child of his to be!
And if a *Man of Truth* make no pretence
To some *unhuman* virtue, the brute crowd
Pluck off his hair, and plant with bitterness
Thorns of reproach on his devoted head!
Heaven knows that we have passions, and have hearts
To love; and they alone embrute or soil
The divine lustre of the better part,
Who love nor intellectual preference seek,
Eradicating from each sympathy
The holiness of reason, and that pure,
And high imagination, which would lose
The bodily in the spiritual.*

I revere
That simpleness which gave to her pure lips
A ready utterance to each inward thought.
And I revere that *obstinate regard*
Which hung upon its object, e'en till all
The tender semblances, which lingering hope

* My earthly by his heavenly overpowered.—MILTON.

Loves with such earnestness, were fully gone!
For passion, sanctified, will centre all
Its warm hopes in a *chosen one!* Not dead,
Nor e'er abolish'd, as some idly talk;
Impostors, or base carles, who never knew
Man's dearest charities. And passions ever
Shake with most potent stirrings the sublime
And pregnant minds, which wield with mightiest skill
The multitudinous elements of life.
But if *that one* forsake the soul which twin'd
So many warm endearments round its choice,
The world will seem a very wilderness!

TO

A YOUNG MAN,

ATTACHED TO THE SPORTS OF THE FIELD.

Detested sport,
That owes its pleasure to another's pain;
That feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks
Of harmless nature, dumb, but yet endued
With eloquence that agonies inspire
Of silent tears, and heart-distending sighs;
Vain tears, alas! and sighs that never find
A corresponding tone in jovial souls.

COWPER'S TASK.

1798.

Oh stay thy hand—thou hast a power to kill
But none to bring forth life! Impressive truth,
Sounding to wisdom like a warning voice,
And teaching that our feebleness to work
The least good thing, should guard us tremblingly
From aught that looks like evil; lest we wrench
From her retired seat the better soul,
The sense which God hath lent us, which that
God

Sees not polluted with a slumbering eye;
But vexes him that sets his gift at nought
With aweful darkness, and a fearful wandering!

Thou seest athwart this grove of trembling trees,
Trembling and glistening with the morning light,
Thou seest yon lavrock rise!—to the great sun
He seems to hasten:—save the burning orb
That lives above, nought but this little bird
Varies the mighty solitude of Heaven!
Art thou assur'd the Almighty doth not speak
To that same little bird?—that morning's glories
Are not discourses of his watchful love
Gladd'ning this innocent creature? Could'st thou seek
To stop his song of gratulation, quench
His sense of joy, and all those living powers
That dance so cheerly in him? They serve Heaven
Who love his works! and they most feel a God
Who hold each bodily sense a holy thing,
Communicating measurably to all
The influxes of that eternal Spirit
Whose countenance to man are day-light hues,
And sky, and sea, and forests, lakes, and hills,
And lightnings, thunders, and prodigious storms,
And suns, and all the company of worlds!

I would not kill one bird in wanton sport,
I would not mingle jocund mirth with death,
For all the smoking board, the savoury feast
Can yield most exquisite to pamper'd sense!

Since nature wills that every living thing
Should gratify the purposes of man,
And wait his proud disposal, let him prove,
E'en in this delegated function, prove,
A deep humility, which fears to tread
Where the all-perfect, and unquestion'd God
Hath wrought strange imperfection—perhaps to
bend,
And by the influence of an holy sadness,
To tame the o'erweening soul! not give a cause
For riotous Dominion, and for Power
Sweeping with mad career from off this world
Its fair inhabitants!

My friend, I knew
A man who liv'd in solitude: a dell
A mossy dell, green, woody, hung around
With various forest growth, was his abode.
And in the forest many a gleaming plot
Of tenderest grass, its island circlet spread!

This man did rear a hut, and lived and died
In that lone dell! He had no friend on earth,
Nor wanted one—For much he lov'd his God,
And much those works which e'en the lonely man
May taste abundantly! And he did think
So oft on life's great Author, that at last
He worshipp'd him in all things, and believ'd
His poorest creatures holy, and could see
"Religious meanings in the forms of nature,"
Dreaming he saw, e'en in the passing bird,
The crawling worm, or serpent on the grass,
An emanation of his Maker—so
That a new presence stung him into thought
And made him kneel and weep!

Well! this poor man
Liv'd on the scanty fruits this little dell
Afforded. Never did a dying writhe,
Or dying gasp, war with his sense of good.
At last *he* died, and such had been his life,
That when he yielded up his animal frame,
It only seem'd as if he went to sleep
More quietly than ever!

TO A YOUNG MAN,

Who considered the Perfection of Human Nature as consisting in the Vigor and Indulgence of the more boisterous Passions.

1798.

THIS is not pleasure! canst thou look within
And say that thou art blest? At close of day
Canst thou retire to thy fire-side *alone*,
Quiet at heart, nor heeding aught remote,
The power of wine, or power of company,
To fill thy human cravings? Hast thou left
Some treasured feelings, unexhausted loves,
Thoughts of the past, and thoughts of times to
come,
Mingled with sweetness all and deep content,
For Solitude's grave moment? Canst thou tell
Of the last sun-set how 'twas freak'd with clouds,
With clouds of shape sublime and strangest hues?
Canst thou report the storm of yester-night,
Its dancing flashes and its growling thunder?
And canst thou call to mind the colourless moon,

What time the thin cloud half obscured the stars,
Muffling them, till the Spirit of the Night
Let slip its shadowy surge, and in the midst
One little gladdening twinkler shook its locks?

Oh, have these things within thee aught besides
Human remembrance? Have they passion, love?
Do they enrich thy dreams, and to thy thoughts
Add images of purity and peace?
It is not so, cannot be so, to those
Who in the revels of the midnight cup,
Or in the wanton's lap, lavish the gifts,
God's supreme gifts, the *energy*, and *fire*,
That *stir*, and *warm* the faculty of thought!
If thou defile thyself, that joy minute,
Deep, silent, simple, dignified, yet mild,
Must never be thy portion! Thou hast lost
That most companionable and aweful sense,
That sense which tells us of a God in Heaven
And beauty on the earth: that sense which lends
A voice to silence, and to vacancy
A multitude of shapes and hues of life?
Go then, relinquish pleasure;—would'st thou know
The throb of happiness, relinquish wine,
And greedy lust, and greedier imagings
Of what may constitute the bliss of man!

Oh! 'tis a silent and a quiet power,
An unobtrusive power, that winds itself
Into all moods of time and circumstance!
It smiles, and looks serene; in the clear eye
It speaks refreshing things, but never words
It makes its instruments, and flies away
As 'twere polluted, from the soul that dares
To waste GOD's dear endowments heedlessly,
And without special care that *present joy*
May bring *an after-blessing*.

LINES

SUGGESTED BY THE FAST,

Appointed for Wednesday, February 27, 1799.

HUMBLE yourselves, my Countrymen!—Bow down
The stubborn neck of Pride! for, east and west,
Do Anarchy and Outrage raise a shout,
And tempt with blasphemy the God of Heaven!—
Humble yourselves, my Countrymen!—behold,
Save in this quiet isle, how Discord stalks,
Spoiling the fair Creation. Discord, child
Of grasping Lust, who, many-handed beast,
Seizes whate'er of rich munificence,
Or plenteous benefit is pour'd abroad;
Wallowing unprofited, and unendow'd,
'Mid all that ministers to use and joy.

Why have WE such immunity from woe?
Why is the wrath of heaven averted hence?
What have WE left undone, or what perform'd,

To appease the God of Justice ?—Countrymen—
With minds not unprepar'd; and consecrate
From all imaginations light, and vain,
From all unholy and polluting things,
Seek out the hidden cause: and, if ye find
(As sure ye will) no argument to calm
The *humble man* who loves his brethren all,
And knows their crimes; and night, and morn,
puts up
A silent prayer for them who heed him not;
With deeply smitten, and o'erflowing hearts,
Turn to the God of Love!——

There is abroad
An evil spirit; a spirit evil and foul,
Who, under fair pretence of *modern lights,*
And vain philosophy, parcels the dole
Of human happiness (that quality
Sought for six thousand tedious years in vain)
With lavish distribution! who with speech
Drest up in metaphysic eloquence,
And eked out plausibly with abstract phrase,
Would snatch from God himself the agency
Of good and ill!—would spoil for ornament,
Particular and *relative,* this universe;

Where circumscribed frailty and defect,
And harmless prejudice, and discipline,
Lead on the social and religious man,
(A thing more sensitive than rational,
Whom one poor unrepealable restraint
More benefits than thousand *abstract* truths)
To gifted penitence, and righteous rule,
And meek suspension of the human will,
Till He imbibe the Heaven-evolved lore
Of Wisdom and divine Philosophy,
Through many a fruitful, and unfruitful age
Piously register'd! And so prepar'd,
By patient noting of the ministries
Of Heaven below; in shadows manifest;
And dim relations; binding ages past,
With present times, and ages yet unborn;
By persevering patience so prepar'd,
(And mind that loves to find a good in evil,
Not banish evil for uncertain good.)
The vast procession of created beings,
The *Will* that links the *vilest elements*,
In a perpetual influence,
To *Highest natures*, He shall comprehend:
Till the magnificence of forms unveil'd
The universal world shall seem to him

A scene of order, and progressive joy,
And blaze of light where God himself transfus'd
Lives in no fabled presence!

This foul spirit
God's holy place irreverently treading,
Break its solemnities, and shameless brings,
Scandal on many a sacred ordinance.
It mocks neglected worth, and secret grief,
That dare not lift a streaming eye to Heaven!
It promiseth the beauteous fruit of peace,
And virtue's coronet, no trial past,
No fiery anguish of the human will
Quench'd with sweet drops of mercy!

'Twould revoke
The *judgment* and the *privilege* annex'd
To Wealth and Talents, Influence and Power!
'Twould snatch the promis'd blessing from the poor,
Hatching an obstinate sedition
From pamper'd lust and infidel despair;
And blot out from its calendar of grace
Faith and forbearance; and deride the heart
That seeks in this "tempestuous state of things,"

To live a life whose inoffensive rule
Owes not its charter to the earth's wise men.

How were the graces of the mind produc'd?
Did not omniscient Deity defer
To banish hence, the appointed difference
Of states and things, of joys and earthly stores,
Of office and magnificence, and rank,
Which some, misnamed wise, affect to call
(Masking their hate in scorn) *human abuse,*
A vicious usurpation?—Countrymen,—
Beware of these, so opulent in speech,
So fair and plausible,—beware of these!—
For they would separate what their God has join'd
In mystic co-existence, evil and good,
Pleasure and Pain, Honour and Infamy!—
This is a scheme of means—we vainly look,
For ends, or resting-places here obtain'd!—
Where were temptation, Vice annihilate?
Could Charity exist where never came
The ills of persecution? Love perform
Its perfect work where hate inflicts no wound?
Could pity weep had man no miseries?
Meekness endure did proud men ne'er prevail?

Or Faith with fixed eye, be crown'd above
Did not some clouds obscure the moral world?

I ask of Thee, thou poor oppressed Man,
Who friendless feel'st thyself, save when thou turn'st
To the Everlasting Friend—I ask of Thee
Whose actions never have been understood,
Whom falsely fixed blame (attach'd to deeds
Inexplicable, save to the All-seeing One)
Has led a superficial world to cast
Among its vile dishonourable things;—
I ask of thee, whether the darkest hour
Of man's rejection, has not brought a boon
Thou prizest more than worlds.—Thou lovedst all,
And perhaps thou lovedst ONE, a fellow being,
Better than life itself;—thou hadst a soul
Of deepest, tenderest feeling;—yet for thee
There was a fix'd and secret interdict
Inwoven in the mystery of thy fate,
Which blasted all thy promises of joy!
It seem'd that thou wert guilty—'twas not so!
Thou wert what *proud men* call unfortunate!—
I ask of thee again, oppressed man,
If this withdrawing of all goodly things,

All the desirable blessings of the earth,
Has not more wrought in thee; more solid peace,
More quiet joy, and heavenly grace, produc'd,
Than aught a *smiling providence* could give?

And these resources which we ne'er foresee,
But which experience, sanctified by Heaven,
Holds it most safe to trust, this evil spirit
Would utterly destroy; impatient ever
Of present ill; and ne'er from pious faith
Trusting that all things tend to happiness.—
This evil spirit misnamed *Liberty*—
Licentiousness 'mong wise men deem'd, and call'd
By angels *blasphemy;* rejects a God
Not seeing as man sees; who sets at nought
All earthly wisdom, and of smallest things
Works mighty marvels of stupendous power!

But heed not, Countrymen, the *bleating Wolf!*
Humble yourselves before the God of Heaven,
Remembering still that Liberty ne'er comes
Where more of wishes, more of lusts intrude
Than human skill has power to gratify!
That liberty comes not with laws relax'd;
With troublous opposition, and with rude
And boisterous promise: that futurity,

Blest with the flush of prosperous event,
And grac'd with revel joys, shall put to shame
The pale experience. Rather, Liberty,
Thou liv'st with social confidence and peace!
Where, reasoning from the unfallacious past,
We trust with sweet and sober certainty
The issue of the meditated deed.—
Or rather, Liberty, thou lov'st to dwell
Where personal honour, not defined rules;
Where manly generosity, and pride
That shrinks from every stain; not civic laws
That force us to be free, till Freedom's self
Becomes a galling servitude;—are found!

Then bow yourselves, my Countrymen, and own,
That, in a world where voluntary slaves
Exist by millions—wretched slaves to vice—
That, in a world where victims to the sword,
Famine, and pestilence, are swept away
As summer insects by an eastern blast,—
That, in a world like this—you're BLEST and FREE!

LINES

TO A BROTHER AND SISTER,

Written soon after a Recovery from Sickness.

6th April, 1799.

'Tis surely hard, the melancholy day
To waste without the cheering voice of friend:
To see the morning dart its golden ray,
To see the night in misty dews descend,
Nor catch one sound where Love and Meekness blend.
'Tis surely hard for him who knows how dear
A kindred soul, eternally to send
A fruitless prayer for smiles and words that cheer,
The wish in looks revealed and rapture's holy tear,

II.

Him whom the spirit of attachment warms,
The nameless thrilling and the soft desire:
Him whom the glance of melting beauty charms,
Its young allurement and its living fire;

For him in tedious languor to expire,
Dreaming of bliss, yet wake to deep despair;
Fitted for love, of every joy the sire,
To drag a life of unrequited care,
For him, such silent woe, 'tis surely hard to bear.

III.

Thank Heaven, such lot hath never yet been mine,
For if the gloom of discontent should fall,
And my young spirit for a season pine,
I cannot, save with gratitude, recall
Gay-painted hours of dancing festival,
When new and joyous friendships bore away
All fears of what in future might befall,
All recollections of uncheer'd dismay,
Giving to full content the heartsome holiday.

IV.

And still (with pride my heart the truth reveals)
Beneath my quiet and paternal roof,
Mine eyes for ever meet the look that heals
Pale Sorrow's anguish with a kind reproof.

For all the prodigal regards of youth
And all the sympathies of gentlest love,
And all the sweet simplicity of truth,
In silent harmony for ever move
Along the heaven-blest scene ordained for us to rove.

V.

Brothers and Sisters! friends of infancy!
Oh how my heart rejoices when I speak
Of all the sweetness of the home-bred tie,
Whose gentle charities and graces meek
Spread with a fairer hue the youthful cheek
Than blushing passions deep and fiery glow;
Yes! it beseems that I could never seek,
My heart so turns to you, were ye to go,
A new or foreign aid to mitigate the blow.

VI.

When morn first wakes me with its cheering smile,
That cheering smile, it seems, my friends, to wear,
Is friendship's charm transfused, that all the while
Lives in the silent spirit of the air:

Your voices, looks, and kind inquiries bear
Their living incense to each gladdened view;
And all that beams around so gay and fair,
Is Love's officious toil, that paints anew
Each form that looks like life with no terrestrial hue.

VII.

And when meek evening glides athwart the sky
And drowsy silence hangs upon the earth,
Save that some distant hum which breathes to die,
May chance from haunts of bacchanalian mirth
To meet his ear who sadly wandering forth
Courts every hinting of departed bliss;
Yes, when meek evening glides, there spring to birth
Thousand dear images of happiness,
The Brother's honest grasp, the Sister's holy kiss.

VIII.

And most to you my two beloved friends!
My Sister, and my Brother, most to you
My heart its cordial gratulation sends;
Olivia, Robert, friends both tried and true!

Chiefly, this moment, would my soul renew
To you its pledged affections, *latest *met:*
(The absent ever it shall keep in view)
But oh, Companions of my youth, not yet
May I your female care and manly zeal forget.

IX.

Yes, all without was drear, and all within
Was dark and hopeless! pale disease had shed
Her dullest glooms, and fain would I have been
A quiet slumberer, number'd with the dead.
But you with sweet solicitation led,
And tender blandishment, my troubled breast
From fears and doubts, and terrors fancy-fed,
And lulled my spirit to a heavenly rest
With Hope and Peace and Joy, and many a long-lost guest.

* These were the only two of the family whom the author met at home on returning from a journey: soon after which meeting this poem was written.

X.

Then Sister, Brother! friends whom ne'er I hail
Without some gentle stirring of the heart;
Then Sister, Brother! friends who never fail
To hold in absence, with a secret art,
A sweet communion with my better part,
Accept my thanks, accept my humble lays!
And for one moment if your features dart
That simple welcome which affection pays,
Though faultering, weak, and poor, my verse
were rich in praise!

LINES

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Written at Barnwell, near Cambridge, and descriptive of the adjacent Country.

March 1st, 1800.

SOUTHEY, once more her interrupted voice
The Muse resumes! To tell thee, Honoured Friend,
Though absent far, in Fancy's airy dream
That oft thy *presence* my lone hour beguiles,
Were sure a bootless toil. Thou knowest well
Thy station in my heart. What then select
To grace the humble verse? Perchance 'twould fill
A vacant hour to learn what scenes surround
The abode of *him* to whom thy love recurs
With sweet memorial unimpaired by time.

No rocks or mountains here, or "sea in storms,"
The world of sight endear. One joyless plain,
A map that imitates the cold March sky,
Lies evermore before the weary view.

Yet *here* I snatch my hours of untold bliss!
And curious, busy, in the anxious search
Of forms inanimate, on which to fix
My wayward sympathies, I haply find
A charm in barrenness; a power to please,—
Though bleakest winter lowers on every side,—
In many a shape which other eyes might pass
Unnoticed, unremembered.

The rude thorn,
Coated with yellow moss, on whose sere boughs
Hang scarlet berries, and some flakes of wool,
That hoarsely rustles on the wide grey moor;
The chalky hill, which terminates the view,
Crowned with a clump of firs, that make me think—
So small things wake sublime remembrances—
Of Scottish mountains, and of Scottish woods;
And other more remote acclivities,
With almost undistinguishable swell
Lying like pale clouds on the horizon's bound,
Amuse my soul with many a pleasing dream.

The little sinuous stream of underwood,
Shrouded in blackness of the winter months,
Stealing beneath the chalky eminence;—
Amid whose shade the church tower* peeps alone,
Now a dim sullen mass of duskiest hue,
Unchecquer'd, save by one distinctest spot,
The single window of the embattled pile.
And now with shade half cloth'd, and half with light;
And near the wood, and still beneath the hill,
A snow-white cottage gleaming silently:—
All these to me are images of joy,
That suit the hour of meditative thought,
And bring refreshment to that purer mind,
Which seeks, by harmony of outward forms,
To 'stablish inward harmony and love,
And build on visible and earthly things
Unearthly thoughts! I love the wide extent,
The interminable sweep of unfenced moor,
That bares its bosom to the face of heaven!
Where, when the faint sun pours a silvery light,
The wandering clouds a partial blackness shed;
And o'er whose thistled heaps and clodded soil,
And whistling stubble, flies the cutting wind.

* The Tower of Cherry-Hinton Church.

I love the shrill song of the merry lark,
Or fitful twitter of the lonely bird,
Which, at this season, from these naked plains,
Is all the music nature sends to heaven.

Rather than human converse, found in haunts
Of traffic, learning, pleasure, or of pride,
Love I these quiet unpretending friends!
And these are all the quiet rural friends
I here can boast possessing. Save one spire,*
One spire, and woody village, whence, full oft,
My soul refreshed, through the unwearied gaze,
Drinks silent happiness! The glistening spire
Smiles in the sunbeam with a heavenly light;
And on a green bank fenced by orchard trees,
Lying towards that spot, we see, at noon,
Or hear, while bleating tenderly, young lambs
Enjoy the first warm cherishings of spring.
And, in the general waste, the trees around
Wave not unnotic'd, though their naked boughs
Boast not their summer richness, and the meads
Spread their green turf so sweetly to the stream

* The village of Chesterton, which, in connexion with a wooded and meadowy foreground, formed with its stream, as seen from the Author's parlour at Barnwell, an exquisite scene.

Silently flowing, that I seem to find
This scene, by crowds frequented every day,
Who note it not, a world of loveliness:
And, all forgetful of sublimer charms,
I look with gratitude to Him who made
All fair varieties, and gave to me
A sense those fair varieties to feel.

LINES,

WRITTEN 10TH APRIL, 1800.

Oh rus! quando ego te aspiciam? quando licebit
Nunc veterum libris, nunc somno et inertibus horis
Ducere sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ.

HORATII *Opera*, 4th Sat.

IN this poem the author writes in an assumed character. No man can despise the pretensions to happiness of a *solitaire* more than himself; but, in the alternative between society and solitude, circumstances will sometimes imperiously urge to the choice of the latter, even where the warmest social affections are implanted in the heart, and where no moral delinquency exists in the character of the person who thus retires from the world.

"I hear people talk of the raptures of solitude; and with what tenderness of affection they can love a tree, a rivulet, or a mountain. Be-

lieve me, they are pretenders; they deceive themselves, or they seek, with their eyes open, to impose upon others. In addition to their trees and their mountains, I will give them the whole brute creation; still it will not do. There is a principle in the heart of man which demands the society of his like. He that has no such society, is in a state but one degree removed from insanity. He pines for an ear into which he might pour the story of his thoughts; for an eye that shall flash upon him with responsive intelligence; for a face, the lines of which shall talk to him in dumb, but eloquent discourse, for a heart that shall beat in unison with his own. If there is any thing in human form that does not feel these wants, that thing is not to be counted in the file for a man; the form it bears is a deception, and the legend, man, which you read in its front, is a lie. Talk to me of rivers and mountains! I venerate the grand and beautiful exhibitions and shapes of nature; no man more. I delight in solitude. I could shut myself up in it for successive days. But I know that every man, at the end of a course of this sort, will seek for the intercourse of sentiments and language. The magnificence of nature, after a time, will pro-

duce much the same effect upon him, as if I were to set down a hungry man to a sumptuous service of plate, where all that presented itself on every side was massy silver and burnished gold, but there was no food."*

In short, let a man be ever so happy in solitude, nothing is more true than the old remark, that he will want some one to whom he may say, "I am happy."

In solitude
What happiness! Who can enjoy alone?
Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?

MILTON.

YES, in this world, neglected Genius, pine;
The prize of happiness shall ne'er be thine;
A melancholy journey thou must run,
Until the tedious race of life be done,
Save when to fill thy craving breast, are given
Some kind prelusive images of heaven.
No, Genius, no! 'tis well for thee, if soon
Thou quit with apathy life's giddy noon.
If thou alike or praise, or blame, canst hear,
With iron soul untouched by hope or fear;

* Fleetwood, by Mr. Godwin, vol. ii. p. 200.

If thou canst scorn each benefit, and fly
From friendship, gratitude, and sympathy;
'Tis well;—go on thy way;—and strive to keep,
Such is life's cheat, this undisturbed sleep.
Look not on cheeks that glow, and eyes that play
With radiance softer than the vernal day;
Look not on tears that start in passion's name,
Nor heed mild tones which music's self might claim;
Heed not the eloquence of lips which tell
Of all the secret ecstacies that dwell
With truth sincere, and love supremely blest,
By a responsive, sympathizing breast.
No!—these are mysteries of life's sacred store
Which, once unfolded, thou canst rest no more.
Thy die is cast; thy day of peace is fled;
And Nature's blackest storms surround thy head.
To common mortals these are common joys;
But not to thee;—the perilous charm destroys;
Or leaves such sad fastidious gloom behind,
That moping apathy benumbs the mind.
Go then, relinquish *pleasure* wouldst thou taste
One hour of comfort in life's gloomy waste.
Relinquish human converse, human things,
And all those schemes with which the wide world rings.

Yet there are charms for thee: spring's sunny
hues,
The whispering breeze, and morning's glittering
dews;
The toll of village bell at eventide,
The vacant ramble by the wild brook side;
The village tower that peeps among the trees,
The silent stream which curls at every breeze;
The transient sun-gleams, and the shadowy spot
Of sailing cloud, which like a breath is not;
The merry lark, that sings sweet songs of mirth,
And every bud that gems this various earth:
When calm, luxuriant, summer's fervid days
Have sunk away in one effulgent blaze,
The timid white stars, one by one, to eye,
Or deepening crimson of the twilight sky;
The witchery of rolling clouds that weave
The solemn pageant of departing eve.
The awful rock, the mountain wrapp'd in storms,
And Nature's majesty of sterner forms;
Tempest, whose blackness all creation shrouds;
The solemn march of winter's midnight clouds.
The moon's soft radiance breaking forth so white,
Amid the murmur of the gales of night;
When clouds with clouds fantastically play,
And wave their pale skirts to her liquid ray;

Or when alone the silent orb on high
Looks on the world with clear serenity;
From gloomy wood emerging to the sight,
And pouring down the vale her flood of light.
The velvet meadow, and the peaceful stream,
Where through light poplars plays the chequered
gleam;
The rocking forest roused to music deep,
As o'er its wavy top thick tempests sweep;
The quiet lake reflecting in its tide
A wond'rous world to other waves denied;
Or else, in conflict, vexed by tempests rude,
Beating the dark cliff with its foamy flood:
Or now, in distant blackness, scarce survey'd
Far, far beneath the mountain's threatening shade,
While through the clouds—that rest, the stormy
day,
Like travellers weary of a trackless way,
'Mid druid piles, and haunted caverns rude,
The rifted rocks of giant solitude—
Full many a mountain stream is seen to flow,
Sprung from the skies, a track of vapoury snow;
The solemn music of the ocean roar,
Or wildly surging on some desart shore;
Or when scarce curling with the zephyr bland,
Its blue waves tremble on the silvery sand.

The sweeping blast that cleaves the sounding sky;
The moorland's desolate immensity;
The lonesome bird of night, which sadly calls
To mountain streams, and mossy waterfalls;
These joys unblamed, thy mystic soul may know;
These, unpolluted by an after-woe;
For Innocence, and Purity, combine
To bless the worshipper at Nature's shrine.
To these devoted, Genius, thou shalt prove
A heaven, in solitude, of silent love.

LINES

TO THE SCENERY OF CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORELAND.

Written at Barnwell, near Cambridge, April, 1800.

To quit a world where strong temptations try,
And, since we cannot conquer, learn to fly.

GOLDSMITH.

Sin, has ne possim naturæ adcedere partes,
Frigidus obstiterit circum præcordia sanguis;
Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes;
Flumina amem silvasque inglorius.

Georgicon VIRGILII, lib. ii.

FAIR scenes, I may not see you, yet my heart
From your enchantment will not long depart:
I turn from man's unprofitable strife,
From all the fruitless stir of polished life,
To think on you; to bid your prospects roll,—
A wondrous vision,—o'er my gladden'd soul.
Ah, scenes beloved, that I with you could stray,
And loiter out with you the summer day;

Could I the rosy beams of morning view
Shed on your gorgeous heights its magic hue;
Could I recline beneath your rocking woods,
Whose secret shades, where solemn Fancy broods,
Shroud the deep murmurs of your mountain floods;
Or could I slumber on those banks which lave
Their fairy verdure in the crystal wave
Of many a Lake that lies beneath the sky
In solitary, silent majesty:
Your visionary train of forms sublime
Should wake the ardour of the lofty rhyme;
Should lift my soul above whate'er of low
It haply learned in other scenes to know.
To you I turn!—I turn from human lore:
Of what the world affords I ask no more.
To me kind Heaven has given a *faithful friend*,
And competence: no more Heaven's self can send!
Now, all I seek is peace, a silent nook,
Whence, with unruffled spirit, I may look
On all those tempests of life's early morn,
That wrung a heart by restless passion torn;
And told, did pitying Heaven not interpose,
Of short-liv'd raptures, and of fatal woes.

Ah, scenes of peace!—Might I your charms explore,
Devote to nature, I would ask no more!
Might I with you consume my daily bread,
And pillow nightly my reposing head;
With you awake at morning's breezy voice,
And in my calm course, like yon sun,* rejoice;
Might I with you wear out the sultry day
Viewing your wonders in the noon-tide ray;
With you repose at shadowy even-tide,
And list her meek songs by some wild brook's side;
Or many a cloud of lurid red descry,
Weaving bright visions for the poet's eye:
Might I, when April's mildest evenings seem
Like some pale mourner's earliest smiles to gleam,
View the soft azure of her dewy cloud
With faint flush tinged the silent landscape shroud;
Oh! would kind Heaven on me such scenes bestow,
'Twould give a comfort to each parted woe.

* In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course.—*Psalm* 19th, Verses 4th and 5th.

Here, as I welcome morning's silken ray,
And drink the spirit of the vernal day,
And turn with anxious thought, mine eyes around,
To catch whate'er in this bleak waste is found;
If chance the heathy hill at distance rise
Bath'd in the aërial brightness of the skies;
Or winnowing zephyr of the fruitful west
Shed healthy freshness on my weary breast;
If chance a clear brook musically flow
Adown some nameless mead, where willows grow,
Along whose mossy banks of tenderest green
The earliest violets of the year are seen,
And many a daisy, mixed with primrose pale,
Bends at the touch of spring's rejoicing gale,
The gale which loves to trace the streamlet's source,
And steals as wedded to its nameless course;
If chance a cot, beneath some bowery oak,
Send up in silence its pale wreath of smoke;*
If sudden noon-beams, like enchantment, wake
The voice of sylvan mirth from mead or brake;

* And wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees.
See WORDSWORTH'S *Lyrical Ballads.*

If dewy meads with bright luxuriance glow,
And every flower with new-born radiance blow;
If chance a village church, or village cot,
Mark the embowered hamlet's peaceful spot,
Where waves the elm beside the churchyard wall,
Vocal with red-breast's trill, or sparrow's call;
Around whose hollow trunk, beneath whose shade,
Stands the known bench for rustic converse made;
And stretches towards the road the slanting green,
Where village hinds in pastime oft are seen;
While merry bells in tuneful peals convey
The jocund news of heartsome holiday:
If chance these rustic sounds and shapes impart,
Some comfort to my nature-kindling heart,
Clothed in the wildness of poetic light,
Your brighter wonders sweep before my sight.

The little hill, at distance seen to rise,
Of mountain speaks, whose summits pierce the skies;
Brings to my view the majesty of forms,
Which bid defiance to the North's bleak storms;
The rising zephyr tells of sportive gales,
That curl your lakes and fan your laughing vales;

Or, borne aloft on pinion more sublime,
To the peaked cliff's aërial summit climb;
The crystal stream which winds where willows grow,
With more than mountain murmurs seems to flow,
Near its smooth lapse, and sand of sunny dyes,
The chasm yawns, and rock-piled summits rise;
And o'er its vacant banks does fancy see
The stormy torrent's fearful imagery,
The peaceful cottage to my soul recalls
Your more fantastic shed, with leafy walls,
Where I, with Love, would gladly wear away
What more remains of life's mysterious day:
It brings the little hut, the nameless stream,
Where Hope might ponder on her softest theme;
It brings the mead that spreads before the door,
Its cheerful verdure, and its flowery store;
It brings the woods above the roof that rise,
Whence many a glad bird's song salutes the skies;
It brings the garden prankt with many a flower,
The sacred transports of the evening bower,
Where, clothed in peacefulness, my soul should prove
The father's fondness, and the husband's love:

It brings with all its charms the imaged cell,
Which hopeful fancy fears to love too well!

As yet this must not be! my weary feet,
Must still awhile toil on where proud men greet.
The obtrusive world's unprofitable load
Must still with many a pang my bosom goad:
Yet grant, oh Heaven, a spirit to endure,
Not yield; though art in every shape allure.
E'en now I feel within my burthen'd mind
An anxious trouble 'mid your charms to find,
That day of rest from each polluting thing,
Which silence, solitude, and nature bring;
And every shape and sound that here annoy
Speak, though in accents rude, of future joy.

LINES

TO THE SABBATH.

April 23, 1803.

THE Author is well aware that, as far as the following Poem appears to be argumentative, the principle which it inculcates is indefensible: it seems like inferring that, because an institution may be abused, however excellent it may be in its design, it should not be used.

Wherever, whenever, and on whatsoever occasion, human beings meet together, they will carry human passions with them; to church, as well as to market; to the meeting-house, as well as to the ball-room: the good done by means of positive religious rites is prodigious; and it would be difficult to make out a case of any counterbalancing evil of which they are the cause; therefore let it not be supposed that, because

the Author in the following Poem satirizes the intrusion of vulgar passions within the sacred threshold, he no longer wishes that threshold to be passed: on the other hand, he only laments that it is not more universally passed, as such a phenomenon would be one of the most conclusive prognostics that those very passions which he has described were on the decline. In one word, let the following poem be considered rather as a picture, than as an enunciation of principles.*

Ah, holy day, I love to hear the chime
Of merry bells that usher in thy morn:
The rustic trimly clad, the rural lass,
Delight my heart. I love to see them speed,
Along the meadow pathway, to the style
That bounds the church-yard. The suspense
Of toil, the universal quietude

* The author might add, that even the poet, *par excellence* religious, Cowper, might be deemed irreligious, if to satirize the abuse of religious institutions, render a man obnoxious to such an epithet. See his description of the coxcomb parson, and various other passages in his poems.

That dwells on all things, quietude from sounds
Of human labour, shed a pleasing calm.
Nature alone puts forth her voice to-day,
The joyous birds, the bleat of sportive lambs,
The low of cattle, zephyrs breathing peace,
And health; the music of the woods that wave
Their dancing heads, and vocal, as they wave,
With sounds like those breath'd from the Æolian lyre,
When on its trembling strings the faint breeze pants,
Or ocean's deeper voice from distance heard;
The gratulation of a thousand streams
Sparkling like crystal to the glorious sun:—
All these unite in choral harmony:
And frivolous art withdraws the obtrusive strife,
That Nature's song may reach the ear of all.

Haste, let me join the comely throng that seeks
The House of God: there be my prayer breathed forth
With more expressive accent, and the song
Of praise ascend more ardent, with the hymn
Mingled of countless grateful spirits: there

The decent rite, the anthem's chaunted lay,
The hallowed vestment, and the sacred grace
Of hoar antiquity's religious garb,
Shall aid the pious feeling, and express
The shapeless fervours of abstracted love,
Devotion's undefined extasy
In saintly forms of import well conceived.

Vain dream, alas! for though the form may speak
The inward sentiment that now disturbs
The o'ercharged heart,—though all inanimate things,
The decent rite, the anthem's chanted lay,
The hallowed vestment, and the sacred grace
Of hoar antiquity's religious garb,—
Though to the feeling heart when, undisturbed,
It contemplates the scene, an energy
May seem to breathe within the gothic walls,
Filling the sanctuary, like that of old,
With an invisible, present Deity:—
Though all the circumstance of things unite
To aid profound impression, they unite
In vain; for what can inert objects do,
Mute and inanimate, when all the soul,

The spirit of the assembly, counteract
Their weak, inefficacious agency.

Where does the dowager, seldom visible,
Come forth with all her "honours thick upon her,"
Chariot, and footman, with embroidered gold,
Flying, with prayer-book in his hand, to ope
The already unclasped pew, and shewing wide
To the abashed assembly, she can keep
Menials for *vanity* as well as *use?*—at church.
Where does the importance of the country squire,
Hedged in the immunities of his kingly pew,
Find a fit scene of action?—at his church.
Where does the high-bred lady condescend
To exhibit all her store of courtly airs,
Her nods, grimace, and regulated smiles,
And all precedency's theatric forms?—
At church.—Where does the giddy serving-maid,
Or farmer's daughter, love to expose the charm
Of ribbands, hats, and lace, that Folly's food
Which will ere long to ruin tempt her heart?
At church.—Say, where do vanity and pride,
Pretence, and sly hypocrisy resort?—
To church:—and where, if piety be found,

Simple, with cheek bedewed with contrite tears,
Will flinty scoffers point and smile?—at church.

Mark the sleek pastor, how he hurries through
The sacred office! The simplicity
Of gospel days, the tongue that utters things
Accordant with the heart, the heart that feels
Accordant to the law and testimony—
Where are they found? The pompous hierophant
Hiding beneath professional pretence
The love of power; or the coxcomb, pert,
Scented, accomplished, as the spruce gallant—
Too oft characterize the anointed band.

I know that there are some who bear the mark
Of true apostleship, who feel for souls,
Weep for the wandering, pray for the distress'd,
And, interceding, stand between their God
And many a trembling sinner; of their flock
The spiritual fathers; when occasion bids,
The temporal fathers too; weeping to see
The havock and disorder vice has made,
They bear a balm for every human wound.
But these how few! and he that deeply feels
The worth of piety, that simply longs

To utter, what he cannot bear to keep
In selfish silence, whither shall he fly
If Sanctity, Simplicity, and Love,
Pity, and Mercy, Truth without pretence,
Be qualities to spiritual fellowship
Essential, indispensible esteemed.

LINES

WRITTEN IN RETIREMENT, IN A MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRY.

Nec vixit malè, qui natus moriensque fefellit.

26th April, 1803.

DRIVEN from the sweet society of man,
Where shall the solitary being find
Companions for his thoughts, associates
Meet and instructive ?—May the simple lay
Point out to those by adverse circumstance,
And manifold adventure, separate
From cheerful haunts of man, to those divorc'd
For ever from the smiles of fickle fortune,
Haply some soothing solaces of pain,
Some secret sources of concealed delight,
Innocent, yet ennobling, free to all,
And independent of another's will.

Man hath an eye to see; but, indisposed,
Neglects the gift, save in the gaudy scene
Of glittering art. But there are forms unknown,
Save to the watchful, meditative eye,
Which yield sincere delight. The harmonious scenes
Of nature, and the harmonious scenes of art,—
Where modest art, not striving for a vain
Pre-eminence, is nature's minister,—
Affect a feeling deeper than the sense
Of beauty: thoughts of moral good they raise,
Visions of innocence, and holy peace;
Not those fantastic dreams of old Romance,
And pastoral Folly; *these* severe and pure,
As *those* enervating, corrupt, inane.

Can heart unmoved, that hath a sentiment
Of goodness left, the cottager behold,
Who duly to his toil goes forth at morn,
And brings at close of each laborious week
His hard-earned pittance; while his partner's thrift
In wholesome fare discreetly parcels out
The fruit of honest industry. His babes
Cleanly, though coarsely clad, his neat fire-side,
Bespeak accordant industry at home;

And save when sickness visits—common foe
Of rich and poor—the unregarded hut,
Where dwells this humble pair, go when you will,
Your eyes may feast upon a scene of peace.

Nor do domestic scenes in rural life
Alone delight: the grey stone church, the cot
Of rudest fabric, or the pastoral farm,
Placed midway on some tempest-howling hill,
Protected solemnly by ancient pines,
Are not unnoticed by the poet's eye,
Nor by his heart unfelt.* There is a scene
To which I often turn; the rustic bridge
'Neath whose grey arch, in days of wintry gloom,
Whitens far off the torrent's foam; the bridge;
The inn for tired foot-passenger, who haunts
These seldom trodden scenes; the village school,
The village green, where little rustics sport,
And dance, and sing; the mill, the waterfall,
Make up the measure of its simple charms;

* This is as exact a description, as it is in the power of the Author to give, of a scene on which a little knot of buildings is collected together, situated about two miles from Ambleside, Westmoreland, and called Skelwith Bridge.

But, these all lie embosomed where the swell
Of mighty mountains, and untravelled hills,
Protects them from the intrusive eye of man,
And wanton Art's capriciousness: this knot
Of little dwellings, should the night o'ertake
The weary mountaineer, with glimmering light
Might haply cheer the wanderer: should his hand
The latch uplift, a cordial welcome there
Might chance await his weary form; perchance
The foaming can, the gossip's merry tale,
The blazing hearth, and kind officiousness,
Might rouse the sense of long-forgotten joy.

*Mark yon grey scar, where, from the rifted cliff,
The holly, birch, the oak, the yew, and ash,
Start; while the huge mass of that hanging rock,
Cloathed with the ivy's mantling evergreen,
Resembles most some fortress imminent,
Or tower of ancient castle, piled alone

* This description also is topographically exact. The scene is to be found on the right hand side of the river Brathay, about a mile and a half from Ambleside, and is seen to most advantage from the opposite side of that stream.

On pathless height abrupt, 'mid woods and wilds,
And savage precipice: in wintry hours
When, like dishevelled tresses, brown sere
leaves,—
'Mid here and there some haply interspersed
Of sickly yellow, some of blacker dye,—
Rustling with bleak winds, shiver on the oak,
Still the green ivy mantles the grey scar,
And shadowy pines wave darkling; mingled hues
From tawny oak, the ivy, rock, and pine,
Enrich the wild, fantastic imagery.
But when the smiling hours of spring advance,
And vernal suns arise, the slender birth
First grateful yields its bloom to fostering gales
Trembling with fairy leaf of feathery gold:
Its silvery stems innumerable, like shafts
Taper and glossy, mock the forest's gloom,
And through its depths conspicuously shine,
As polished pillars of white marble, seen
At night, in some old temple's vast expanse.

Nor, leaving loftier scenes, in days of spring,
Do shady lanes retired, a mean delight
Afford;—'mid leafy thicket, plume-like fern,
On mossy bank, there pale primroses peep;
The harebell, orchis, and wild strawberry,

Anemone; the scented violet,
Azure and white; veronica, tho' *last*,
Not *least* in loveliness, whose spikes are bathed
In brightest blue transparency of Heaven.
These are the forms which in his solitude
Amuse the poet's mind, dispel his cares,
And cheat away retirement's languid hours.

Come, dear Sophia, let us wander forth,
And taste the charms of nature: while our hearts
Distend with mutual feeling, the warm tear
Shall gush at thoughts of present happiness,
And haply too the smile of gratitude
Shall play upon our lips, and thankful throbs
Swell in each breast to Him, to whom we owe
Escape from past perplexity and care.

LINES

WRITTEN 19TH AUGUST, 1807.

"For, who can enjoy the world without deceiving, or being deceived?"—Mrs. GRANT's *Letters.*

WHENCE, and what are we?—Wherefore are we made
The sport of passions that defy controul?
Why do these dreams of happiness invade,
With ardent impulse, my aspiring soul?

Say, am I born to live the sport of dreams,
Of lying dreams, that flatter, and that fly?
Are they illusive, these delicious gleams
That prompt the soaring wish, the immortal sigh?

I might be happy, could I cease to think,
That all I have is but entrusted power;
I might be happy, could my reason wink
At pleasure's thrill, and love's enraptured hour.

I might be happy, could these conflicts cease,
  Or reason take possession of my soul!
Could stern resolve bid passion be at peace,
  And every struggle of my will controul.

Why are we destined thus to wage a war?
  Nor from the fated proof have power to fly?
Here, conscience, awful priestess! cries, beware!—
  There every sense is wooed by extasy!

Is this thy destiny, Oh man?—Are these
  The terms on which thy soul its life received?
Reason, thou canst not tell me how to appease
  This questioning of what may be believed!

Experience teacheth that the noblest mind,
  The pang that weans from life shall likeliest brave!
Here pause:—and with a faith devout, not blind,
  Implore thy God to pity and to save!

LINES

ON AN HOUR-GLASS.

Addressed to Miss H——— W———.

28th Jan. 1808.

"When Time doth float on Pleasure's wing,
  And hours glide on, allur'd by joy,
Reflection's sigh from thee shall spring,
  Thou little monitory toy!

"When anxious care doth ply the loom
  Of life, with fingers dull and slow,
Thou shalt remind me that this gloom
  Came, and with changeful time *will go.*"

Thus Harriet whispered as the sand,
  Ebbed softly from her hour-glass near:
A faithful friend could not withstand
  The occasion for a vow sincere.

(For as this toy, the welcome guest
  Of buoyant mirth or languid care,
Doth solemn thoughts to one suggest,
  And to the other solace bear,—

So she, disinterested friend,
  Has smiles for joy, for sorrow sighs;
Though still her inward feelings tend
  With sacred grief to sympathize).

"Oh, may no present hour, attired
  In gloom, a prayer for change draw forth!
Yet each successive hour, inspired
  By hope, exceed the last in worth:

May fancy wreathe around this toy
  Blooms stolen from the Elysian clime;
And Peace, the monitor of Joy,
  Brood on the tranquil lapse of time!

These sands, that fall in silent showers,
  To their *first* source we turn once more;
May friendship so for thee the hours
  Of youth, in distant age restore!"

Oh, Harriet, thoughtless of thy power!
  And humble, useful glass, like thee,
The highest blessing thou dost shower
  Unconscious of thy destiny.

E'en as this toy, that through life's span
  The quick illapse of time revealed,
Doth bring prime benefits to man—
  Till Time to Eternity doth yield;

So of the virtues' holy train,
  Disinterested love shall call
For Heaven's most gratulating strain—
  Till self be lost!—God all in all!

LINES,

Written in consequence of hearing of a young Man that had voluntarily starved himself to death on Skiddaw, and who was found after his decease in a bed of turf, piled with his own hands, previous to that event.

29th June, 1808.

WHAT didst thou feel, thou poor unhappy youth,
Ere on that sod thou laid'st thee down to rest?
Ah, little know the children of this world
What some are born to suffer! Did some dread
And perilous thought possess thy blasted mind?
Did fierce remorse assail thee? Wert thou torn
With fatal, incommunicable thoughts?
I pity thee, poor stranger! In a world
Fearful, a world of nameless phantoms framed,
Was thy abode!—Thou sawest not with eyes,
Thou heardest not with ears, nor felt'st with touch,
Like eyes, and ears, and touch of other men.
Thine was a cruel insulation, thine

A malady beyond the reach of love,
Beyond the reach of melting sympathy.

Oh, when Heaven wills that the external world
And the internal world should be at war;
When Heaven suffers that sensation's chords
Shall all be out of tune; when every sense
At variance with the other, like a wrench'd
And shattered instrument of music, yields
A harsh report of discontinuous pangs,
As infinite in number as in fear,
To the universal influences of life,
What does not man endure!—Yet man e'en then
Perchance has somewhat of the flush of health,
Has strength of muscle, and the swelling limb,
So he is pitied not! Though if he smile,
His smile like wandering spectre of the night,
Apparent in some beauteous maiden's shape,
Fills with more deadly chill, because it wears
The form of joy in circumstance of woe!—
Though if he speak, the incongruous attempt
Betrays the treachery of his voiceless thought!
His words are like the sound of crazy bells,
Swinging in open air, no longer pealed
By hands accordant; but the tempest wakes
Or sullen breeze, when nightly visitant,

Strange discord from their hoarse and iron
tongues!
His accents, unaccountably impelled,
Or rush with fearful spontaneity,
Or languidly eke out their dying tones;
And sentences half finished, broken words,
Abrupt transitions, discontinuous thought,
Of intellectual alienation tell.
Say, fared it so with thee? Then be at peace!
And may the God the fortitude who gave
To bear thy silent voluntary pangs,
Receive thee in the arms of pitying love.

LINES,

WRITTEN 29TH JULY, 1808.

Oh Love, the bosom formed for thee
  No meaner joy can move;
Not to be loved is not to be,
  To him who knows to love.

'Tis not the rapturous transport sought,
  In passion's granted aim;
'Tis not the kiss with nectar fraught,
  The look without a name;

But 'tis the soft endearing sense,
  The wish with wish that blends,
That to each word an influence
  Of fascination lends.

'Tis the fond partial estimate,
  In confidence sublime;
The thought that swells with warmth so great,
  That reason seems a crime.

'Tis this, oh Love, or chiefly this,
  Which, for the once-loved breast,
When ceases thy celestial bliss,
  Robs future life of rest.

LINES

TO MY CHILDREN.

Written under the Influence of great Depression of Spirits,
11*th June*, 1819.

Heu! quam minus est reliquis versari, quam vestrorum meminisse.

My babes, no more I'll behold ye,
  Little think ye how *he* ye once lov'd,
Your father who oft did enfold ye,
  With all that a parent e'er proved.

How with many a pang he is saddened,
  How many a tear he has shed,
For the eight human blossoms that gladden'd
  His path, and his table, and bed.

None knows what a fond parent smothers,
  Save he who a parent has been,
Who once more, in his daughters, their mother's,
  In his boys has his own image seen!

And who——Can I finish my story?——
  Has seen them all shrink from his grasp;
Departed the crown of his glory,
  No wife, and no children to clasp!—

By all the dear names I have utter'd,
  By all the most sacred caresses,
By the frolicksome nothings I've mutter'd,
  In a mood that sheds tears while it blesses;

By the kisses so fond I have given,
  By the plump little arm's cleaving twine,
By the bright eye, whose language was heaven,
  By the rose on the cheek pressed to mine;

By its warmth that seemed pregnant with spirit;—
  By the little feet's fond interlacing,
While others pressed forward to inherit
  The place of the one thus embracing;

By the breast that with pleasure was troubled,
  Since no words were to speak it availing;
Till the bliss of the heart was redoubled
  As in smiles on the lips 'twas exhaling;

By the girl,* who, to sleep when consign'd,
  The promised kiss still recollected;
And no sleep on her pillow could find,
  If her father's farewel were neglected;

Who asked me, when infancy's terrors
  Assail'd her, to sit by her bed;
And for the past day's little errors
  On my cheek tears of penitence shed.

By those innocent tears of repentance,
  More pure e'en than smiles without sin,
Since they mark with what delicate sentence
  Childhood's conscience pronounces within.

By the dear little forms, one by one,
  Some in beds closely coupled half-sleeping,
While the cribb'd infant nestled alone—
  Whose heads at my coming all peeping,

* Sophia.

Betrayed that the pulse of each heart
  Of my feet's stealing fall knew the speech;
While *all* would not let me depart,
  Till the kiss was bestowed upon *each;*

By the boy,* who, when walking and musing,
  And thinking myself quite alone,
Would follow the path I was chusing,—
  And thrust his dear hand in my own;

(Joy more welcome because unexpected,
  By all this fond store of delights,
Which, in sullen mood, had I neglected,
  Every curse with which Heaven requites,

Were never sufficient for crushing
  A churl so malign and hard-hearted)
But by the warm tears that are gushing,
  As I think of the joys that are parted;

Were ye not as the rays that are twinkling
  On the waves of some clear haunted stream,
Were ye not as the stars that are sprinkling
  Night's firmament dark without them?

* Owen.

My forebodings then hear!—By each one
Of the dear dreams through which I have travell'd,
The cup of enjoyment from none
Can I take, till the spells, one by one,
Which have wither'd ye all, be unravell'd.

STANZAS.

LET THE READER DETERMINE THEIR TITLE.

Written 27th and 28th June, 1819.

"I HAVE, of late, lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercise; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, this brave o'erhanging, this majestical roof, look you, fretted with golden fires, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours."—SHAKSPEARE.—*Hamlet.*

OH, that a being in this latter time
  Lived such as poets in their witching lays,
Feigned were their demi-gods in nature's prime!
  The Dryad sheltered from noon's scorching
    rays

By leafy canopy;—the Naiad's days
  Stealing by gently wedded to some spring,
In pure connatural essence;—while the haze
  Of twilight in the vale is lingering,
The Oread from mountain top the sun-rise welcoming.

Oh, that a man might hope to pass his life,
  Where through lime, beech, and alder, the proud sun
His leafy grot scarce visited;—where strife
  Is known not;—to absolve—to impeach him none;—
His moral life, and that of nature, one:—
  Where fragrant thyme, and crisped heath-bells prank
The ground, all memory of the world to shun,
  And piercing, while his ears heaven's music drink,
Nature's profoundest depths, the God of Nature thank.

To drink the pure crystalline well, to lave
  His strong limbs in some Naiad haunted stream,
On that sod, which one day might be his grave,
  To shelter him from noon-tide's scorching beam,

In cool recess;—and thus, while he might dream
His life away, his appetite assuaged
By kernell'd fruits with which the earth doth teem;—
Forget that he hath been where men engaged
In civilized contention, foamed and raged.

Oh, that the wild bee, who, with busy wing,
Hums, as she travels on from flower to flower:
Oh, that the lark that now is carolling
Above yon ancient ivy-mantled tower;
Oh, that the stock-dove from her ancient bower,
The gurgling fall of waters; the deep sound
Of pines, whose film-like leaves scarce own the power
Of panting breeze, most like the voice profound
Of ocean, when its roar, by distance, is half-drowned:

Oh, that the bleat of lambs, the shepherd's reed,
The tinkling bell which warns the flock to fold;
Oh, that the harmonies we little heed,
Eternal harmonies, and manifold,

Throughout God's works in pathless mazes rolled,
All concords that in heaven and earth delight,
Sweet to the sense of hearing, as we hold
The form of beauty to the lover's sight,—
Oh! that in one vast chorus these would all unite!

My God! this world's a prison-house to some;
And yet to those who cannot prize its treasure,
It will not suffer them in peace to roam
Far from its perturbation and its pleasure.
No! though ye make a compact with its measure,—
Except to one or two by fortune blest!—
'Twill only mock your efforts; thus your leisure,
Yielded to her, becomes a sad unrest;—
It pays the fool the least that worships her the best.

Yet, on the other hand, if ye forego
Her haunts, and all her trammels set aside,
Though 'tis her joy ungratefully to throw
Scorn on her slaves, her vassals to deride,—

" Hewers of wood, drawers of water," plied
With daily drudgery know this truth full well—
She will from pole to pole, through time and tide,
Still follow you with persecuting spell,
And by her whispers foul, make solitude a hell.

Therefore breathed I this prayer, that, as in years
Long parted, beings were supposed to live
Exempt from human ties;—from human tears,
And human joys;—endowed with a reprieve
From friends to flatter, or foes to forgive;—
So it might fare with me!—Oh, Liberty,
I ask for thee alone;—with thee to weave
Quaint rhymes, to breathe the air, were heaven to me;
To dream myself the only living thing, save thee!

When Heaven has granted thought and energy,
Passion, Imagination, Fancy, Love,
Pleasures and pains, hopes, fears, that will not die,
'Tis surely hard to be condemned to rove

In a perpetual wilderness; to move
  Unblest by freedom, and humanity;—
I blame not those for whom the world hath wove,
  Spells that to them are best reality—
Some are there 'twill not serve, nor yet will let
    them fly.

Oh! for an island in the boundless deep!
  Where rumour of the world might never come;
Oh, for a cave where weltering waves might keep
  Eternal music!—round which, night-winds
    roam
Incessantly, mixed with the surging foam;
  And from their union bring strange sounds to
    birth;—
Oh, could I rest in such an uncouth home,
  No foes except the elements;—the earth,
The air;—though sad, I'd learn to make with
    them strange mirth.

I'd learn the voices of all winds that are;
  The music of all waters: and the rude
Flowers of this isle, although both "wild and
    rare,"
  Should be by me with sympathy endued.

I would have *lovers* in my solitude;
  Could animal being be sustain'd, the mind
Such is *her* energy, would find all good;
  And to her destiny eftsoons resigned,
In solitude would learn the infinite to find.

Oh! thou first Cause, thou giver of each blessing,
  E'en were *I* cursed, so vain a thing I'm not
As to suppose *nothing* is worth possessing;—
  That misery's the universal lot.
A cold hand lies on me;—a weight;—from what,
  Whence, where, or how,—boots it not here to tell:
I only wish that I could be forgot,
  And that I might inherit some small cell,
With blessings short of heaven, and curses short of hell.

This medium is my prayer. Thought, gift divine!
  When first—like Alpheus, sung by bards of old,
Who sank into the earth, that he might join
  The adored Arethuse;—the bedded hold

Through which thy rich and copious treasures roll'd,
  Is shaken with the tempest of despair;
And when first sapped by sorrows manifold,
  Thy streams no longer murmur clear and fair,
Buried in silent caves of agony and care;

When first, instead of each translucent rill,
  Fed by thy parent fount, which issued forth,
Wandering playfully "in its own sweet will;"
  Instead of dimpling brooks, whose voice was mirth;
Clear waves, that to and fro upon the earth
  Ran amid grass, and flowers, and plume-like ferns,
As they were free by charter of their birth;
  Or clear tide lapsing from thy copious urns,
So calm, the bending grass but tells one where it turns;

When first, instead of such prodigious wealth,
  Waters that stray through meads, and while they stray,
So silently they flow, and with such stealth,
  The richer green—the lustier flowers betray

Alone, the secret of their noiseless way:
  While others take a more fantastic course,
And with such involutions sing and play
  'Twixt sandy banks, or with a note more hoarse,
O'er rocks and sparry beds, forgetful of their
    source,

That one might deem they were without a law,
  Lawless as winds, if winds could be, or ere
The Almighty architect impressed an awe
  On nature's wildest freebooters;—or were,
Like as is sung of the crystalline sphere,—
  Involved in maze of such perplexity,
That e'en that skill which made *intention* clear,
  So intricate was it, one might deny
The very law itself from its transcendency.*

When first, I say—I've played the truant long,
  From the theme I had espoused—the streams
    of thought
Are poisoned at their source; the bosom wrung
  With tempests that contained them,—care dis-
    traught,

* ——————————Mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular,
Then most, when most irregular they seem.—MILTON.

Man prays for death; he cannot then be brought
  To meek submission:—all is anarchy
Within;—with insurrection* fraught,
  His state is like a kingdom, where the die
Is hazarded, of sacrilegious victory.

But, let hours, days, weeks, months, and years pass by,
  A sullen acquiescence then succeeds,
And the first proof of nature's sanity
  Is, that the mind its own condition heeds:
Though it be choaked with thorns, and clogged with weeds,
  A parent's fondness still it 'gins to feel
For its own creations; and to this succeeds
  Strongest imagination;—the barbed steel
From foes has pierced too deep for other men to heal.

* Between the acting of a dreadful thing,
And the first motion, all the interim
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream;
The genius, and the mortal instruments,
Are then in council; and the state of man
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

SHAKSPEARE.—*Julius Cæsar*

No! still betwixt him and his fellow men
  The irrepassible gulph, when once passed, gapes;
Yet, though his thoughts, that creep as in a den
  The slimy insect, e'en in all their shapes
Have nothing reconciling, yet escapes
  Nought that is harmful; like the bloated toad,
They are dark, they are dreary, loathsome: human apes
  Thence deem them poisonous: they are a weary load;
And not the less since undeservedly bestowed.

But oh, mistake them not!—They are free from ill!
  The seven-months' babe, whose little hand's at rest,
While his warm lips imbibe the milky rill,
  Cushioned upon his mother's well-known breast,
Is not more innocent of feeling, drest
  In any garb of hatred or of ire.—
I speak of one I've known; earth hath no rest
  For such as he:—no correspondent wire
In any human breast can recognize the lyre,—

Like the lorn harp of Tara on the walls,
  Swept by the invisible breathings of the wind,
When as that harp had ceased in Tara's halls,
  To pour the soul of harmony refin'd—
That tells his fate. Strange melodies assigned
  To it, harsh discord seem to th' ears of all:
Yet not a note doth breathe from it designed
  To give a pang: it mayn't be musical:—
Well may a shattered lyre, a shattered bard
    befall.

Tones untranslateable should it discourse,
  When by its master touched; oh, deem not ye,
Because ye know them not, and think them
    hoarse,
  That in those tones no mystery may be,
Such as unravelled might give harmony
  To its wild cadences!—Then let him sing;
And though his song please not, yet still if he
  Feels, while it floats around, as though a wing
Protected him with tremulous faint o'ershadowing,

'Tis more than naked skies, and naked stars,
  'Tis more than Heaven's canopy bestows,
'Tis more than storms, and elemental wars,
  And murky clouds, winds, rain, sleet, hail,
    and snows,

Think* not that I blame these. They are not my
foes.
I seek communion, covet sympathy,
E'en with their wildest moods:—they suit my
woes—
I meant to say when souls from agony
A little respite feel, souls will self-questioned be.

And now, oh God! e'en let my wish once more,
Ere this lay cease, be to thy love confessed,
Grant me to vegetate on some wild shore;
Since I cannot be happy, as the best
I e'er can hope to be, let mine own breast
Be to itself its sole companion;—there,
Though much of wretchedness, and much unrest
Be housed, at least there need be no despair
From that which I once deemed sole source of
cureless care:

That in my poor thought was *malignity*,—
I never wished to harm a living thing,—
Pain was a frightful mystery to me;
I've often shudder'd at the moth's scorched
wing;
Oft from the path the snail or worm would fling,

* I tax ye not, ye elements, with unkindness.
SHAKSPEARE.

Doomed to the tread of careless passenger:—
How* little dreamt I *then* this shuddering,
From the heart's nice calculation, whence we infer
Futurity, was my fate's harbinger.

No!—no!—Oh God!—If there be one beneath
The cope of Heaven; or e'en in Heaven enshrin'd,
Who, with accusing voice, could dare to breathe
That pang of body, or that pang of mind,
From me resulting, were to them assign'd,
With perverse wilfulness, when next I look
Towards the starry vault, may I be blind!
Blot out my name from thy eternal book!
A shelter for my head let earth afford no nook!

But since, on the other hand, I may proclaim
That "peace on earth, and good-will towards men,"
Have, save through inadvertence, been the aim
Which governed heart, and tongue, and act, and pen;
Why should I not, oh Father, once again

* A sort of secret foreknowledge, which is, in fact, only a nice calculation made by the feelings, before we permit it to become an operation of the judgment.

Canterbury Tales, by Miss LEE.

Find that some peace is yet in store for me?
Leave to me thought, oh leave to me a den,
And then from agony to be set free
Sufficeth for the heart broken by agony.

Once more, oh Father, hear!—Thy will is power!—
Act, thy decision is;—all, all is thine!—
The pangs that shake me, bodings that devour,
Both how I agonize, and how I pine,
Thou knowest well: and though each faltering line
Of mine betray affliction's cleaving curse,
Thou knowest well the torments that are mine
As far exceed the pictures of my verse,
As atoms are exceeded by the universe.

Lays such as these might then seem roundelays,
And madrigals, compared to truth's plain theme,
To elegies, to epitaphs, on days,
On friends, on joys, departed like a beam
Of summer, or the lightning's trackless gleam:
Oh, then, my humble prayer do not deny
If I implore, or that the feverish dream
Of life might end, or that in liberty
Forgotten I might live, since unwept I must die.

POEMS

ON

The Death

OF

PRISCILLA FARMER;

BY HER GRANDSON,

CHARLES LLOYD.

Death! thou hast visited that pleasant place,
Where in this hard world I have happiest been.

BOWLES.

THIRD EDITION.

SONNET.

THE piteous sobs that choak the Virgin's breath,
For him, the fair betrothed Youth, who lies
Cold in the narrow dwelling; or the cries
With which a Mother wails her Darling's death;
These from our Nature's common impulse spring
Unblam'd, unprais'd; but o'er the piled earth,
Which hides the sheeted corse of grey-hair'd Worth,
If droops the soaring Youth with slacken'd wing;
If He recal in saddest minstrelsy
Each tenderness bestow'd, each truth imprest;
Such Grief is Reason, Virtue, Piety!
And from the Almighty Father shall descend
Comforts on his late Evening, whose young breast
Mourns with no transient love the Aged Friend.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

DEDICATORY LINES

TO THE

AUTHOR'S BROTHER.

My James! to whom can I more fitly bring
These rhymes, which I have caroll'd sorrowing,
Than to a Brother who did once possess
With me an equal share of kindliness
From Her departed! and whose tears will swell
At these, my dirgelike melodies, that tell
How good She was.—Thou sportedst once with me,
A careless infant round her aged knee,
And aye, at welcome eve didst haste to share
Her pious greetings and her simple fare.
When Manhood's maze, trac'd by wild-footed Hope,
Seem'd all inviting, towards our upward slope
How did she often turn her moisten'd eye,
That, but for us, were fix'd beyond the sky!

And ah! how feelingly would She express
The aid that Virtue brings to Happiness!
And when She droop'd, we both, my James, did bend,
O'er a lost Parent, Confessor, and Friend!

My Brother, I have sought that he who gave
And took our Friend, her virtues may engrave
Deep in our bosoms; as we journey on
Cheerily sometimes, oftner woe-begone,
Still we may think on her with holiest sighs,
And "struggle to believe," from yonder skies,
Her children She regards; and when we fare
Hardly on this bleak road, our mutual prayer
Shall rise, that we in heaven may repossess
Our earliest Guide to heavenly happiness!

CHARLES LLOYD.

SONNET I.

My pleasant Home! where erst when sad and faint
I sought maternal friendship's sheltering arms,
My pleasant Home! where is the rev'renc'd Saint
Whose presence gave thee thy peculiar charms?
Ah me! when slow th' accustom'd doors unfold,
No more her looks affectionate and mild
Beam on my burthen'd heart! O, still and cold
The cherish'd spot where Welcome sat and smil'd!
My spirit pines not nursing fancied ill;
'Tis not the fev'rish and romantic tie
Which now I weep dissever'd; not a form
That woke brief passion's desultory thrill:
I mourn the Cherisher of Infancy!
The dear Protectress from life's morning storm!

SONNET II.

Oh, I have told thee every secret care!
  And crept to thee when pale with sickliness!
Thou did'st provide my morrow's simple fare,
  And with meek love my elfin wrongs redress.
My Grandmother! when pondering all alone
  Fain would I list thy footstep! but my call
  Thou dost not hear; nor mark the tears that fall
From my dim eyes! No, Thou art dead and gone!
How can I think that Thou didst mildly spread
  Thy feeble arms, and clasp me o'er and o'er
Ere infant Gratitude one tear could shed!
  How think of Thee, to whom its little store
My bosom owes, nor tempted by Despair
Mix busy anguish with imperfect prayer!

SONNET III.

Written at the Hotwells, near Bristol.

MEEK Friend! I have been traversing the steep
Where when a frolic boy with patient eye
Thou heededst all my wand'rings, (I could weep
To think perchance thy Shade might hover nigh,
Marking thy alter'd Child); how little then
Dream I, that Thou, a tenant of the grave,
No more shouldst smile on me, when I might crave
Some little solace 'mid the hum of men!
Those times had joys which I no more shall know,
And e'en their saddest moments now seem sweet,
Such comforts mingle with remember'd woe!
Now with this hope I prompt my onward feet,
That He, who took Thee, pitying my lone heart,
Will reunite us where Friends never part!

SONNET IV.

Erst when I wander'd far from those I lov'd,
If weariness o'ertook me, if my heart
Heav'd big with sympathy, and ach'd t'impart
Its secret treasures, much have I been mov'd
Thinking of those most dear; and I have known
The task how welcome, feelingly to pour
Of youthful phantasies th' eccentric store
Thro' the warm line: nor didst thou seldom own
The tender gratulation, earliest Friend!
And now when heavily the lone hours roll
Stealeth an Image on my cheated soul
No other than Thyself! and I would send
Tidings of love—till the mind starts from sleep
As it had heard thy knell!—I pause, and weep!

SONNET V.

When that dear Saint my fancy has possess'd,
  Cheating my griefs, and then to bitter tears
  Leaves me, I seek to calm my aching fears,
Thinking how holily She still suppress'd
Each dim disquietude, looking to Him
  The Friend of patient souls, who wait to hear
  The "still small voice" to forlorn Sorrow dear!
Then do mine eyes with kindlier sadness swim:—
  And I implore, that She whom I did weep
  As I had had no hope, as on Death's sleep
No more arose, when She shall liveliest dart
  On each tranc'd sense, may teach my prayers to rise
  Impassion'd, and a purer sacrifice,
Lifted by Her, the Priestess of my Heart!

SONNET VI.

When Thou that agonized Saint dost see
  Worn out, and trembling on the verge of death,
  Murmur meek praises with convulsed breath,
And sanctify each rending agony,
Deeming it a dim Minister of Grace
  Medicinal, and stealing her from all
  That subtly might her ling'ring spirit thrall;
When Thou dost read in her unearthly face,
How She doth keep in thankful quietness
  Her patient soul, dar'st Thou thy *best Friend* deem
  As One deceiv'd by a most idle dream?
Ah, surely no! if Thou at all possess
A humanized heart; e'en if thy mind
Hate not the only hopes of humankind!

SONNET VII.

Oft when I brood on what my heart has felt,
And think on former friends, of whom alas!
She the most dear, sleeps where th' autumnal grass
To the wet night-wind flags, I inly melt;
And oft I seem (my spring-tide fled away;
While the heart's anguish darkens on my brow)
Likest the lone leaf on the wintry bough
That pines for the glad season's parted ray!
Such thoughts as these, when the dull hours pass by
Shroud them in hues of saddest sickliness!
Yet oft I wiselier muse, yea almost bless
The shiverings of departed extasy;
Thinking that He who thus my spirit tries
Draws it to Heaven a cleansed sacrifice!

SONNET VIII.

My Bible, scarcely dare I open thee!
  Remembering how each eve I wont to give
  Thy due texts holily, while She did live,
  The pious Woman!—What tho' for the meek
Thou treasurest glad tidings, still to me
  Of her I lov'd thou dost so plainly speak,
And kindling virtue dost so amply tell
Of her most virtuous, that 'twere hard to quell
  The pang which thou wilt wake! Yet, hallow'd
    book,
Tho' for a time my bosom thou wilt wring,
Thy great and precious promises will bring
  Best consolation! Come then, I will look
In thy long-clasped volume, there to find
Haply, tho' lost her form, my best friend's mind!

SONNET IX.

When from my dreary home I first mov'd on,
After my Friend was in her grave-clothes drest,
A dim despondence on my spirit prest,
As all my pleasant days were come and gone!
Strange whispers parted from th' entombing clay,
The thin air murmur'd, each dumb object spake,
Bidding my overwhelmed bosom ache:
Oft did I look to Heaven, but could not pray!
"How shall I leave thee, quiet scene?" said I,
"How leave the passing breeze that loves to sweep
"The holy sod where my due footsteps creep?
"The passing breeze? 'Twas She! The Friend pass'd by!"
But the time came; the passing breeze I left;
"Farewell!" I sigh'd, and seem'd of all bereft!

SONNET X.

Oh, She was almost speechless! nor could hold
  Awakening converse with me! (I shall bless
  No more the modulated tenderness
Of that dear voice!) Alas, 'twas shrunk and cold,
Her honour'd face! yet, when I sought to speak,
  Through her half-open'd eye-lids She did send
  Faint looks, that said "I would be yet thy friend!"
And (Oh, my choak'd breast!) e'en on that shrunk cheek
I saw one slow tear roll! my hand She took,
  Placing it on her heart—I heard her sigh,
  "'Tis too, too much!" 'Twas Love's last agony!
I tore me from Her! 'Twas her latest look,
Her latest accents—Oh, my heart, retain
That look, those accents, till we meet again!

SONNET XI.

As o'er the dying embers oft I cower,
When my tir'd spirits rest, and my heart swells
Lull'd by domestic quiet, Mem'ry dwells
On that blest tide, when thou the evening hour
Didst gladden: while upon th' accustom'd chair
I look, it seems as if Thou wert still there:
Kirtled in snowy apron thy dear knees,
Propt on the fender'd hearth my fancy sees,
O'er which exchanging souls we wont to bend!
And as I lift my head, thy features send
A cheering smile to me—but, in its flight
O'er my rain-pelted sash, a blast of night
Sweeps surlily! starting, my fancy creeps
To the bleak dwelling where thy cold corse sleeps!

LINES

Written on a FRIDAY, *the Day in each Week formerly devoted by the Author and his Brothers and Sisters to the Society of their Grandmother.*

THIS is the day we children wont to go
In best attire, with gay high-swelling hearts,
And infant pride, to the belov'd repast
Of her, our reverenc'd Grandmother! the time
By us, delighted infants, still was call'd
An holiday! E'en ere the shadowy morn
Peep'd dimly thro' our half-drawn curtains, we
Would tell each other of the day, and hail
With one accord, and interchange of soul,
The heartsome festival of home-born love!

Our matin task, with o'ercharg'd restless souls
That wearily suppress'd joy's giddiness,
How ill perform'd! Learning's dull mockery o'er,
How did we shout, and rend the air with cries
Of glad deliverance! For the hour was come,

The hour of Joy! Faint-heard, the rumbling wheels
Proclaim the kind conveyance sent by her,
The watchful Friend, to bear the feeble ones:
Perchance some babe that still in helplessness
Clings to its Mother's breast, or one that left
But now its Nurse's lap, another yet
That scarcely lisps its benefactress' name,
Yet calls itself, in pride of infancy,
Woman or Man!—Ah, enviable state!
When, in simplicity of heart, we're pleased
With misery-meaning names! The mother still
With kisses fond, or smiles of anxious hope,
Tended affection's tott'ring troop: while we,
By pedant watch'd, hurried along with step
Measuring back half its way, all anxious now
To reach the lov'd abode, yet oft repress'd
By him, the surly Tyrant of those years,
When freedom seems most precious. But the tree
First seen, that screen'd that spot, how eagerly
We hail'd it, beat our hearts, our froward steps
Now quicken'd, now untractable, in spite
Of threaten'd durance, bore us on, till soon,
A happy train! athwart the lawn we rush'd,
Mounted the steps, burst swiftly thro' each door
In vain our course impeding, and at last

Threw our fond arms around the much-lov'd form
That smil'd our welcome, bright'ning every face
With kind reflection of propitious Love!
Oh! 'twas a scene that fill'd the happy heart!
A scene, which when my musing memory feigns,
Starts a warm tear unwittingly, a sigh
Rises within, for it will ne'er return!

The welcome o'er, and intercourse of looks
Anxiously smiling, interrupted oft
By quaint inquiry, and meek playfulness,
Each hastens to his sport. This to a spot
Trimly defended from the intruding step,
Hight by the busy urchin, who had there
Exhausted all his little store of taste,
A Garden!—There he weekly brought some flower,
Primrose or violet, or, of costlier kind,
The rose tree, or the tulip's gaudy gloss:
For all his scanty hoard unsparingly
This tiny scene engross'd, the well-earn'd gift
Was here expended, and he oft would gaze
With big-swoln heart, exulting at the thought
That he might call the spot belov'd *his own!*

It was a fairy scene! the utmost range

Of some soft sylph that guards infantine bliss,
And prompts its nascent dreams! Aloft in air
Some tempt th' adventurous swing, while others waft
The shapely kite. Thus pleasing still and pleas'd
The day pass'd on: the hospitable meal
(Where circulated looks affectionate)
Employ'd no tedious hour, for all around
Was childish mirth, and warm solicitude;
So fled, 'twixt cares of friendliness and joys
Heartfelt and unrestrain'd, all cheerily,
In sanctity of bliss, the simple day!
'Twere not misnam'd if call'd a little Sabbath!

To me, when frisking in the sports which now
Memory tenacious dwells on, 'twas I ween
A prodigality of bliss! but, ah!
I elder than the train that gather'd there
Joy's infant buds, earlier their blight deplor'd!
When ran the urchins to their sports, for me
Ere youth to manhood all reluctantly
Resign'd its sway; or evanescent, ere
The tremulous dimple to the rigid line,
The woe-fix'd character of countenance,
Had yielded quite; how oft unblest and restless,
Slow, and with ling'ring gaze reverted still,

I've wander'd from the scene, the simple scene
That once engross'd me wholly; and would pine
Troubled with wishes, and perplex'd desires,
Then all mysterious. Often would I weep
Still wond'ring at my tears, and sigh, and sigh—
Yet could my fancy feign no rapt'ring object
Apt for my hopes. Nor seldom would I brood
On vision'd bliss seen dimly. Thus consum'd
My days inactive: thus my infant powers
Fed on imagination's airy stores,
Till all reality was anguish! Now
Manhood advanc'd, bringing the unsumm'd ills
Of Life, and bleak disaster claim'd my tear
While yet I wept o'er fancy-pictur'd woe.

For *She*, the Friend, departed! died, and left
Her child but half matur'd! (for manly years
Produc'd not manly thought)—I can no more!
Farewell, best friend! ah, holy Friend farewell!
This day was once with thee enjoy'd, 'tis now
In sad remembrance more than ever thine!

SONNETS.

Ego, apis Matinæ
More, modoque,
Grata carpentis thyma per laborem
Plurimum, circa nemus uvidique
Tiburis ripas, operosa parvus
Carmina fingo.

Hor. lib. iv. Ode 2.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

THE following Sonnets can pretend to little more than to be commemorations of particular feelings, or particular scenes, with which, from time to time, the Author was more than usually impressed. The first eight Sonnets have appeared in former editions of the poems of the Author :—all the subsequent ones are now printed for the first time.

In these, comprized in the latter collection, the Author has, with a very few exceptions, rigorously adhered to the repetition of rhymes found in all the sonnets of Italian Authors, from whom those of Great Britain have borrowed this species of composition. In his opinion, the Sonnet, from its brevity, is a poem so liable to be overlooked,

if not despised, that it is well, by connecting with its structure some artificial complexity, to give to it, independently of whatever poetic merit it may possess, the additional one of difficulty surmounted. A poem in three elegiac stanzas, with a couplet tacked to the end of them, like those to which Mrs. Charlotte Smith allows by courtesy the epithet of sonnet, is, in the opinion of the Author, rather an epigram. In the sonnet there should be a oneness of thought and feeling; and this strict unity should pervade it from the beginning to the end: it should not conclude with a point; but the same austere energy with which it is closed should be conspicuous in its first line, and should equally pervade it as a whole.

It seems peculiarly adapted as a vehicle for commemorating the more interesting impressions of life:—the writer of it, if he have been accustomed to put down in this form his more vivid feelings, may look back upon a series of such compositions as containing a body of sentimental biography; and to him may be justly applied the description of Lucilius contained in the following lines of Horace:—

Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
Credebat libris; neque, si male gesserat, usquam
Decurrens aliò, neque, si bene; quo fit, ut omnis
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
Vita senis.

The Author cannot so well express what further he may have to say on this subject, as by availing himself of the following paragraphs from the pen of Mr. Coleridge.

"The sonnet is a small poem, in which some lonely feeling is developed. It is limited to a *particular* number of lines, in order that the reader's mind, having expected the close at the place in which he finds it, may rest satisfied; and that so the poem may acquire, as it were, a totality—in plainer phrase, may become a *Whole.* It is confined to fourteen lines, because as some particular number is necessary, and that particular must be a small one, it may as well be fourteen as any other number. When no reason can be adduced against a thing, custom is a sufficient reason for it. Perhaps, if the sonnet were comprized in less than fourteen lines, it would become a serious epigram; if it extended to more, it would encroach on the province of the

Elegy. Poems, in which no lonely* feeling is developed, are not Sonnets, because the Author has chosen to write them in fourteen lines: they should rather be entitled Odes, or Songs, or Inscriptions.

"In a sonnet, then, we require a development of some lonely feeling, by whatever cause it may have been excited, in which moral sentiments, affections, or feelings, are deduced from, and associated with, the scenery of Nature. Such compositions generate a habit of thought highly favourable to delicacy of character. They create a sweet and indissoluble union between the intellectual and the material world. Easily remembered from their briefness, and interesting alike to the eye and the affections, these are the poems which we can 'lay up in our heart, and in our soul,' and repeat them 'when we walk by the way, and when we lie down, and when we rise up.'"

The author is sorry, after having made this beautiful extract from the Introduction to the

* The Author supposes, that by "*lonely*," Mr. Coleridge means "single" feeling, not solitary feeling.

Sonnets of Mr. Coleridge, that he is obliged to confess that he totally differs from him in the opinion given in the succeeding part of that composition: after having laid it before his readers, he will conclude this little address with the reasons which induce him to dissent in opinion from so great an authority in almost all questions, and particularly in any one connected with poetry.

"Respecting the metre of a sonnet, the writer should consult his own convenience.—Rhymes, many or few, or no rhymes at all—whatever the chastity of his ear may prefer, whatever the rapid expression of his feelings will permit;—all these things are left at his own disposal. A sameness in the final sound of its words is the great and grievous defect of the Italian language. That rule, therefore, which the Italians have established, of exactly *four* different sounds in the sonnet, seems to have arisen from their wish to have *as many*, not from any dread of finding *more*. But, surely, it is ridiculous to make the *defect* of a foreign language a reason for our not availing ourselves of one of the marked excellences of our own. 'The Sonnet,' says Preston, 'will ever be cultivated by those who write on tender pathetic subjects. It is peculiarly adapted

to the state of a man violently agitated by a real passion, and wanting composure and vigour of mind to methodize his thoughts. It is fitted to express a momentary burst of passion,' &c. Now, if there be one species of composition more difficult and artificial than another, it is an English sonnet on the Italian model. Adapted to the expression of a real passion! Express momentary bursts of feeling in it! I should sooner expect to write pathetic *axes*, or *pour forth extempore eggs and altars!*"

The Author replies, that experience affords the test by which this question is to be tried. Milton, Warton, and, later than these, Miss Seward, and especially Mr. Wordsworth, have produced beautiful, and the *latter* most sublime, English sonnets on the Italian model. Where Mr. Coleridge learned that "the sameness in the final sounds of its words is the great and grievous defect of the Italian language," the Author cannot tell. No reader perceives such a defect in Ariosto, Tasso, or Dante.—It is certainly more easy to rhyme in that, than in almost any other language, since most of its words terminate with a vowel; but to this very circumstance, must the melody of that language be in some measure attributed. Again, the Author recurs to what

he has already said, that in a poem so tottering on the brink of insignificancy as is the sonnet, it is well, in order to give an artificial value to it, that in the mode of its composition some difficulty be overcome. Yet, were his experience allowed as of any weight, he should say, that when once the mind is resolved upon such a restraint, no more difficulty is perceived in writing a sonnet on the Italian model, than on the more loose one of three elegiac stanzas and a couplet. —Besides, it should seem that the very argument deduced from custom, in the composition of the sonnet, which Mr. Coleridge brings for the restriction of fourteen lines, might equally apply to the further one of confining the termination of its lines to four sounds,—taking for granted, that the author is justified in asserting, that, when the will is bent upon it, it is almost as easy to write a sonnet on the Italian model, as to compose one without any restraint than that of the fourteen lines, he shall, in further extenuation of the former rule, assert with Mr. Coleridge, that "when no reason can be adduced against a thing, custom is a sufficient reason for it."—As for the quotation made by Mr. Coleridge from Mr. Preston, the language there adopted seems a begging of the

question; a position is gratuitously laid down, in order to vindicate an inference. The author always considered the sonnet rather as a severe and terse composition; he never dreamed of it as peculiarly "fitted to express a momentary burst of passion."—Rather did he look upon it as a poem of a meditative and thoughtful cast. There would be no end to theoretical innovations, if persons are thus to frame factitious theories as an apology for them.

SONNETS.

SONNET I.

TO CRAIG-MILLAR CASTLE.

1796.

THIS hoary labyrinth, the wreck of time,
  Solicitous, with timid step I tread;
Scale the stern battlement, or vent'rous climb,
  Where the rent watch-tower bows its grassy head:
These dark, damp caverns breathe mysterious dread,
  Haply still foul with tinct of ancient crime;
Methinks some spirit of the ennobled dead
  High-bosom'd maid, or warrior chief sublime
Haunts them: the flappings of the heavy bird
  Imagined warnings fearfully impart;
And the dull breeze below, that feebly stirred,
  Seemed the deep breathing of an o'er-charged heart.
Proud Tower, thy halls now stable the lean herd,
  And musing *Mercy* smiles that such thou art!

SONNET II.

TO SCOTLAND.

1796.

SCOTLAND! when thinking on each heathy hill,
O'er whose bleak breast the billowy vapours sweep,
While sullen winds imprisoned murmur deep
'Mid their dim caves, such thoughts my bosom fill,
I cannot chuse but sigh! Oft wandering wild
I've traced thy torrents to their haunted source,
Whence down some huge rock with fantastic course,
Their sheeted whiteness pouring, they beguiled
The meek disheartened One, in solitude
Who sought relief. Beneath some aged tree
Thy white cots dimly seen yielded to me
Solace most sweet: nor seldom have I viewed
Their low thatch wishfully, and paused to bless
The uncultur'd children of lone quietness.

SONNET III.

TO NOVEMBER.

1796.

Dismal November! me it sooths to view,
At parting day, the scanty foliage fall
From the wet fruit tree; or the grey stone wall,
Whose cold films glisten with unwholesome dew.
To watch the yellow mists from the dank earth
Enfold the neighbouring copse; while, as they pass,
The silent rain-drops bend the long rank grass,
Which wraps some blossom's unmatured birth.
And through my cot's lone lattice glimmering grey
Thy damp, chill evenings have a charm for me,
Dismal November! for strange vacancy
Summoneth then my very heart away!
'Till from mist-hidden spire comes the slow knell,
And says, that in the still air Death doth dwell!

SONNET IV.

1796.

I HAD been sad, and drooped like one forlorn,
When, as it might befall, I threw mine eye
Athwart the sunny plain; a breeze past by
Pure and inspiriting, as newly born,
The viewless messenger of some far glen!
It breathed, methought, faint tones of distant peace!
Sighing, I turned me from the haunts of men,
And bodied forth some dell, where care might cease.
I gazed, (a lone tear stealing down my cheek),
And wished that I knew one whom I might throw
Mine arms around, and snatching her from woe,
Yield her my heart; and in some simple cell
Where I might win the solace of the meek,
Pray for the hard world, where I once did dwell!

SONNET V.

1796.

When witching evening wore her shadows dim,
Those big-swoln broodings oft I sought to wake,
Which made my lone heart fancifully ache;
And wayward tears unnoticed still would swim,
Filling each "idle orb!" And I have loved
This mystic transport; me the wildering hour
Soothed; and dim vested Silence seemed to pour
Balm, such as might befit a wretch that roved,
Sicklied with thought. Nor was not this my lot!
Now was I mazed with strange perplexities,
And now to my tranced sprite such dreams would rise,
That when I waked, I wept "to find them not!"
Wept that stern reason chased with blasting eye
The feverish mind's fantastic imagery.

SONNET VI.

1796.

'TWERE well, methinks, in an indignant mood,
When the heart droops unfriended, when mankind,
With their cold smiles, have duped thy honest mind,
On the wet heath to stray, while dimly brood
The gathered grey-mists on the distant hill:
Drear should the prospect be, dreary and wide,
No second living one be there espied,
None save thyself; then would thy soul be still,
Curbing its sorrows with a proud despair!
Then wouldst thou tread thy path with firmer pace,
Nor let one scowl on thy resolved face
Blab to the elements thy puny care;
But, soothed to think that solitude can bless,
Muse on the world with lofty quietness.

SONNET VII.

1796.

Ye overflowings of a restless heart,
  Why thus torment me? wishes undefin'd,
Why through my breast so vehemently dart,
  Waking convulsed commotions of the mind?
Oh! stubborn feelings, why do ye refuse
  The high-wrought intercourse of souls to bless?
Why pampering lonesome anguish idly muse,
  Or mutter workings of obscure distress?
Almighty Parent! what a thing am I!
  Shuddering with ecstacy, yet dumb the while!
Thou, only Thou, with chaos-piercing eye,
Canst see me as I am! My Father, rise
  Sublime in love, and with thy calming smile
Hush Thou my spirit's stormy phantasies!

SONNET VIII.

1796.

If the low breathings of the poor in heart,
  If the still gratitude of wretchedness
  Relieved when least expecting, have access
To Thee, the Almighty Parent, Thou wilt dart
Thy loving kindness on the offering meek
  My spirit brings, oppressed with thankfulness,
  At this lone hour: for Thou dost ever bless
The stricken soul, that sighs and cannot speak.
Omniscient Father! I have been perplexed,
  With scoffers linked! yea, called them my friends,
Who snare the soul! But now, by doubt unvexed,
  My heart uplifts itself; its aim extends
To Heaven, where Thou thy brighter dwelling hast,
Oh Omnipresent Thou, first, midst, and last!

SONNET IX.

WRITTEN IN THE SUMMER OF 1799.

On seeing the Moon rise, among Clouds swiftly driven by the Wind, from behind a Hill across Ulswater.

BLACK is the lake, and blacker still the sky,
  And lake and sky with hollow murmur moan;
Scarce shakes a little star its locks on high;
  And Fear's fantastic images alone
Crowd on the expectant spirit! O'er the hill,
  That lifts above the waves its shaggy brow,
Rises a solemn radiance: lovelier still,
  And lovelier, varying like enchantment, now
It stands with burning glory, bright and deep,
  Like that which compasseth the eternal throne
'Mid black pavillion'd clouds. So to the sleep
  Of Patriarch old; when, pillowed on a stone,
Was seen in vision, 'mid thick darkness given,
God's fiery-winged troop, and God in Heaven!

SONNET X.

TO A SISTER.

4th June, 1800.

Oh! shall we visit those high scenes again?
  Say, shall our spirits mount as we descry
Those wavy mountains o'er the western main,
  'Mid the deep colours of the evening sky?
Say, shall we turn to them a grateful eye,
  And think of all our toil and ruth and pain,
Since we with petulant inconstancy,
  Have sought for peace, where peace is sought in vain?
How could we quit thee, Nature? quit thy forms
  Sublime and simple, pure and holy ever?
How cease to wonder at thy solemn storms,
  How from thy softer charms our spirit sever
And hope (thee once enjoyed), where art deforms,
  To find some solace for the base endeavor?

SONNET XI.

TO THE SAME.

5th June, 1800.

SAY, dearest Sister, shall we once more hail
The exalted thoughts, the emotions pure and high,
That wake the soul to living ecstacy,
While wandering Nature down thy wizard vale,
Where comes no threat of pride, nor sorrow's tale,
Where reels not pamper'd wealth obscenely by,
That mar the bosom's deep serenity,
And bid the springs of simple joyaunce fail?
Yes, Nature from her chosen dwelling place,
Shall still with holiest privilege endow;
And, struck with love, to her benignant grace
Thy soul shall dedicate each future vow!
While many a wilder breeze than thought can trace,
Shedding new life, shall wanton round thy brow.

SONNET XII.

TO THE SAME.

5th June, 1800.

Ah, go my Sister!—do not vainly try
To reconcile thy bosom's fervent beat
To sordid Art's unnatural pageantry!
In spotless youth, thy fancy-guided feet,
Have trod the plains, and search'd the mossy dells,
The foaming mountain-torrent's mighty fall;
Have traced the haunts where Inspiration dwells;
And vainly, Maiden, would thy soul recall
Feelings which Nature banished when she view'd
Thy youth so vowed to mystic solitude,
And o'er thy form her sacred mantle threw:
"Henceforth," she cried, "Oh Maid of noble heart,
"Should thou my hallow'd turf-built shrine desert,
"Nought can thy vanished happiness renew."

SONNET XIII.

TO THE SAME.

6th June, 1800.

HEED not the tongue, nor heed the brutal look;
Pure Maiden heed them not, though they assail
Thy simple ear with many a baneful tale;
Thine eye with insult thou disdainst to brook!
Keep that indignant soul! and Folly, strook
With shame, (if shame o'er Folly e'er prevail,)
Shall hie him back with disappointment pale,
And mutter fresh spells o'er his cursed book.
Mutter'd in vain!—For, disenchanted thou,
No spell can wither thee, no charm can bind;
Nature hath heard thy youth's religious vow,
And 'till thou art in her sanctuary shrin'd,
She, watchful for her Child, shall chase away
"Terrors by night, and enemies by day."

SONNET XIV.

TO THE SAME.

6th June, 1800.

WILT thou with me the rifted mountain seek?
  Say, shall I feel thine arm entwin'd in mine,
See nature's healthful blush adorn thy cheek,
  And catch the gleams of sympathy divine
  Intelligibly traced in looks like thine?
Oh, Maiden, shall our full hearts inly speak
  Thanks to the God of nature? Near some pine,
Which sobs, and waves, to gales from mountains bleak,
Whose knotted roots transparent fountains lave,
  Say, shall we lift our eyes, and as we see
  Nature's unutterable majesty,
The rock, the hill, the lake, the woods that wave,
For all the wonders which his bounty gave,
  Praise Him who "habiteth eternity."

SONNET XV.

TO THE SAME.

6th June, 1800.

Now fade the obtrusive colours of the day,
  Like liquid gold the smooth clear lake lies still,
  One streak of purple clouds above the hill
Rests in the silence of the parting ray:
O'er woods, streams, heights, heaven's magic glories play;
  And, save the bleatings of the distant flocks,
  That murmur faintly from yon wood-fringed rocks,
The linnets, or the throstle's evening lay.
The soothing dash of oars that linger near
  Yon headland summit (where the sun-tipt sail
Peeps 'mid the woodland's shadow) to the ear
  No sound is brought!—Dear maid, can aught prevail
To shake thy soul when scenes like these appear,
  Or bid the tides of genial nature fail?

SONNET XVI.

TO THE SAME.

8th June, 1800.

On the calm eve of summer's fervid day
  Say, shall we sail along the lake's clear tide?
And, bounding in the little skiff, survey
  The countless forms that grace its gorgeous side;
  The faint decline of landscape scarce espied,
That to the horizon southward dies away,
The mass of ancient rock like castle gray,
  The solemn wood, or mountain bleak and wide;
The little promontory's joyous green,
  The intersecting underwood, the cot,
Or pastoral farm, whose herds at evening seen,
  Wind with slow varying course the sloping vale,—
Maiden, does Fancy, whispering, cheat or not?
  "Yes, on that glassy tide your bark shall sail."

SONNET XVII.

TO THE SAME.

8th June, 1800.

And further tell me, when the garish light
  Fades from the crystal canopy of heaven,
Maiden, shall we religiously delight
  To linger through the slowly fading even;
  Shall Hope and Fancy, long by Sorrow driven,
To seek some solace by a timely flight,
  Own that meek patience hath not vainly striven
To leave that busier world, where lawless might,
And venom'd malice, fix the inward wound?
Oh God, shall peace and thankfulness abound
  The more for sorrows past, and ills sustain'd?
And as our souls drink in harmoniously
Sounds felt like silence, all resentments die
  In grateful love, for joys and friends retain'd.

SONNET XVIII.

Inserted in a Novel written by the Author, printed, but not published, called "Isabel."

26th March, 1803.

FAIN would I say, withdraw, thou glorious beam,
And shroud thyself in darkness! fain desire
Those rocks, those meads, that wood, yon laughing stream,
All nature's glowing graces to retire;
For more than earthly to my heart they seem;—
So that my struggling sentiments aspire,
To frame the witchery of the lover's dream;
And mental bliss in unison require.
Yes, when I see that pomp of Nature, wrought
To such excess of loveliness, I seek,
Though sought in vain, a soul whose mutual thought
May catch the gush of love which cannot speak;
Rescuing the sigh that may not be subdued
From agonies that dwell with Solitude.

SONNET XIX.

26th March, 1803.

THOU cottage gleaming near the tuft of trees,
Thou tell'st of joy more than I dare believe
Falls to the lot of man; where Fancy sees,
(For credulous Fancy still her dreams will weave)
Him whose low fate no restless cares deceive,
Blest by your smiles, pure as the mountain breeze;
Love, Peace, Humility, whose ministries
Give all that happiest mortals can receive.
Yon sun-tipt grove's embosom'd harmony,
As fades the splendour of departing day,
Swells on my ear most like the minstrelsy
Which from thy inmate's pipe shall bear away
The soul of him who listens, till he hear
Sounds that awaken love's forgotten tear.

SONNET XX.

30th March, 1803.

Is not all nature smiling? Why should I
  Pine with the agonies of wretchedness,
This active life excites, that vanity,
  And him the fervours of affection bless:
Ambition beckoning waves her banners high,
  Streaming with rays of glory and success,
And on the wing of Folly thousands fly
  To grasp the toy of hourly happiness.
Dejection presses me with power-like fate
  In fellowship with woe, and inward care;
  The beauteous forms of nature wrought so fair,
Sink on my spirits with a weary weight;
  Nor active life less threatens with despair,
There flourish insincerity and hate.

SONNET XXI.

30th March, 1803.

Ye buds obedient to the breath of spring,
  Why with no wonted smile are ye caress'd?
Thou soul of Love that, borne on zephyr's wing,
  Dost steal unseen within the soften'd breast,
Who, blessing and tormenting, know'st to bring
  Soft sighs, inquietudes, and many a guest
That hint of dangerous joy, why dost thou *wring*,
  Not *sooth* my spirit to delicious rest?
'Tis that I seek what human heart ne'er found,
  A world where Love, Truth, Peace, their laws maintain;
'Tis that I ask on this polluted ground,
  For wells of living water! Spring-tide train,
Urging a hopeless wish, 'tis thus ye wound,
  To seek the more for what I seek in vain.*

* I weep the more because I weep in vain.—Gray.

SONNET XXII.

Written early in the Morning, soon after the Birth of my third Child; and inscribed to my Mother, who was present on the occasion.

31st March, 1803.

At this still hour, when, scarce by whistling swain,
Bearing his pail, the meadow path is trod;
And thick mists hovering silently retain
On ivied scar, and on the hill's dark sod,
Their nightly station; when throughout the plain
No wreathed smoke betrays the unseen abode
Of early shepherd; how can I restrain
The hymn that mounts in gratitude to God?
The name of Father, now, with threefold force,
Lives in my heart; and she to whom I trace
The gift of life, excites another source
Of natural transport; her belov'd embrace
Strengthening our dear, domestic intercourse,
Protects this blossom of her grateful race.

SONNET XXIII.

14th April, 1803.

THERE is I know not what within my breast,
Which, when these days of vernal beauty come,
Excites my ardent sentiments to roam
For happiness by mortals not possess'd:
The song of birds, the lawn whose soft green vest
Is prank'd with spring-flowers; the translucent foam
Of yon clear stream that winds around my home,
Whose mossy banks my tottering babes have press'd
With daily joy: the hills aërial height
Piled in the summer skies of cloudless blue,
And faintly bathed with like cerulean hue,
So raise my soul, that, when *she* shares the sight,
Who doubles every charm she loves to view,
My o'ercharg'd heart is troubled with delight.

SONNET XXIV.

14th April, 1803.

And when the bleat of lambs from yonder bank
Stole with the murmur of the summer breeze,
That creeps among those ancient holly trees,
And ivied rocks; when all my senses drank
This river's charm, whose course pale violets prank,
Primrose, and daisy; while upon my knees
My babes would mimic nature's harmonies,
How in my heart the sense of pleasure sank!
'Twas pure affection's simple ecstacy!
Let not the spotless sense be e'er defiled,
Which, at that willing hour, so sweetly smiled;
In years of manhood may the father see
The pure enjoyments of the little child,
The pledge of innocent maturity!

SONNET XXV.

TO MY MOTHER.

And art thou come and gone, childhood's first friend?
Oh, sad condition of life's treacherous way,
That thus our best delights must quickly end,
And, save pale memory's treasures, all decay.
And art thou gone? Who knows how time may rend
Existence' feeble thread ere thou canst pay
Another cordial visit, or descend
Oblivious, on the feelings of to-day?
We never more shall meet with thoughts like those
Which now inspire our hearts;—the *hour* so dear,
The *certain hour* is gone; nor mortal knows,
When, where, or how, such hour may re-appear.
Fain would my heart avert the change; it owes
To *change* such bitter pangs, all *change* brings —*fear!*

SONNET XXVI.

Storm at Night, in a mountainous Country, contrasted with Domestic and Fire-side comforts.

How calm is my recess; and how the frost,
Raging abroad, and the rough wind, endear
The silence, and the warmth enjoyed within.
Cowper's Task, Book iv.

11*th May*, 1803.

Now howls the storm pent up amid the hills,
At distance heard; with still increasing roar
It sweeps along the flooded vale: no more
The mountain stream, fed from a thousand rills,
The poet's ear with *soothing murmur* thrills;
But swol'n, impetuous, rushing fiercely o'er,
With vexed surge, the bounds it knew before,
The tempest's solemn diapason fills.

Now stir the fire; while the drench'd windows shake,
And, borne on blásts of night, thick sheets of rain,
With shrill, swift crash burst on each rattling pane:
At eve's due hour where home-bred comforts wake,
Where music, books, and social converse reign,
The scene *is dearer for the tempest's sake.*

SONNET XXVII.

Sketch of a Mountain Cottage.

12th May, 1803.

Yon cottage sheltered by those aged pines,
Whispering with winds that 'mid their branches sweep,
Like the low murmurs of the distant deep;
Yon whiten'd cottage, mantled o'er with vines,
Above whose roof the wooded hill inclines,
With garden where the earliest snow-drops peep,
Crocus, and violet; where Liburnams weep,
And either Lilac, with Syringa, shines.
Yon cot, the heart-struck mourner well might seek,
One whom dejection, or misfortunes, chase
From cheerful haunts of man; its rustic grace
The dignity of better days doth speak,
Nor should the worldling force, in such a place,
The blush of decent pride on grief's pale cheek.

SONNET XXVIII.

12th May, 1803.

When first among these mighty hills I came,
A wild delirium wakened every sense;
Rocks, hills, woods, waters, lent their influence,
And shapes, and sounds, of more than earthly frame,
Haunted my dreams; the thought of fear or blame
Did never then a deadly chill dispense;
I swiftly caught, unmindful where or whence
It sprung, at rapture's vivifying flame.
But all is chang'd,—I then pursued the sprite
Of airy transport; now I seek the shrine
Of hermit peace; the future then was mine
In gaudy colours drest, now reigns thick night
On the next hour:—oh, could it only shine,
Dreams of past joy, with your reflected light!

SONNET XXIX.

Description of a Spring Hail-storm in a mountainous Country.

13th May, 1803.

Amid those hills, while yet, in clefts, the snow
Chills the first breath of spring's salubrious gale,
Clouds thick, and lowering more and more prevail,
And moans the pent up tempest dull and low.
The clouds advance; the swift blasts, as they go,
Mountain and scar, and rocking wood assail;
Confused murmurs rush athwart the vale,
And winter's eddying leaves whirl to and fro.
Through slanting hail which scuds along the sky
Pale nature gleams in unsubstantial hue,
Th' eternal mountains vanish from the view,—
Now they burst sudden opening from on high,
The fleet-wing'd tempest gather'd and withdrew:
As swift gay sun-beams o'er the landscape fly!—

SONNET XXX.

TO SOPHIA.

Written previous to a Journey to a place very distant from that of our residence.

27th Nov. 1806.

SHALL we again the sacred stilness hail
  Of this belov'd abode? Shall we again,
  Withdrawn from all the hum and stir of men,
Read in each other's looks the cordial tale
Of days of mild esteem?—the interchange
  Of kindly offices?—the sacrifice,
  Silent and free, of wayward phantasies,
That fain would mar a love they could not change?
Had it not been for thee, thou generous soul,
  Whom wrongs of mine could never turn aside,
  Nor petulance, nor wretchedness, divide;
Who, when the black cloud heaviest seem'd to roll,
  Didst spread thy faithful arms thy friend to save—
  His happiest fate had been the silent grave!

SONNET XXXI.

TO SOPHIA.

September 26, 1806.

MAY'ST thou be happy, my beloved friend!
And you, sweet innocents, may ye be blest!
May peace and love from yonder skies descend
And find a home in each unruffled breast!
Oh, could I shroud you in some quiet nest,
Where never sounds of grief or fear offend;
Though still some weight my aching heart oppress'd,
A glow of triumph with its pangs should blend.
But ye, poor babes, must struggle, perhaps must fall,
And thou, best friend, with me mayst bid farewell
To many a flattering hope! but this is all
In darkness hid; and 'tis not fit to dwell
In such a world, on griefs fantastical,
Fitliest unknown! —God grant that all end well!

SONNET XXXII.

TO MISS W——.

On her proposing a Visit to the Family of the Author.

15th Oct. 1806.

DID Fortune smile propitious on our lot,
  Or in our home refinement's magic spell
  Detain those graces you have woo'd so well,
Glad should we be to hail you at our cot!
But honest Pride and Truth, that scorn the blot
  Of false pretension, urge, tho' loath, to tell
  Of thoughts and cares inelegant, that dwell
In mediocrity's most favoured spot.
Then why should we with selfish aim invite
  A friend we love, where anxious cares alarm?
  Rather tell her with fascination's charm,
To thrid the mazy labyrinth of delight;
  Circled by Fancy's rainbow-winged swarm
That live but in the sunbeam of her sight.

SONNET XXXIII.

FROM PETRARCH.

11th Nov. 1806.

SAY, what officious angel bore my grief,
By pity mov'd, to the abodes on high;
That now my Laura hastens from the sky,
With mildest courtesy, to my relief?
She comes to calm my sad and troubled breast,
So full of sweetness, so devoid of pride,
That life, before detested, seems supplied
With consolation, and with thoughts of rest.
Oh, blessed thou, who thus hast power to impress
With sweet intelligencing looks and speech;
Looks, words, more dear from secret consciousness,
That we alone their mystic sense can reach.
For, pitying, thou dost condescend to teach
That thou refusedst, but the more to bless.

SONNET XXXIV.

18th Jan. 1807.

When friendship turns her long averted face,
And sweetly smiles on me again; 'tis hard
To wear the look of coldness, nor embrace
The dear and proffer'd blessing of regard.
Oh *Thou*, at whose behest man runs the race
Of life, howe'er severe; who bidst him guard
His eyes, his senses, and his heart, nor chase
In this bleak clime a premature reward;
Forgive me, if my thoughts, at times, rebel;
If feeling strongly, I should sometimes pine
To make the flattering dreams of pleasure mine—
And grasp those joys my fancy feigns too well.
The ascendant will bends to thy great design
Tho' trait'rous wishes throb, and tears of nature swell.

SONNET XXXV.

FROM PETRARCH.

31st Jan. 1807.

Oh chamber, which, till late, retreat supplied,
From heavy storms that pelted through the day,
Thou seest me now to pining care a prey,
Which from the curious world I fain would hide.
Oh couch, where common griefs are laid aside,
How oft thy shelter did my pangs allay?
Now bath'd with tears, my sighs to thee betray
A cureless passion to despair allied.
Of solitude I am not weary grown:
Myself I fear and my consuming woe,
My tortur'd soul, my insuppressive foe!
And vulgar souls, from whom I long have flown,
(Oh, humbling change!) a refuge now bestow,
So much I dread to find myself alone.

SONNET XXXVI.

FROM PETRARCH.

1st February, 1807.

LOVE, I transgress, and consciously transgress,
But, like the wretch, whom inward flames consume,
My pangs increase, and reason's aid suppress,
Till cureless agony complete my doom.
Some little check to importunate distress
The fear inspired, that I might bring a gloom
On her sweet hours of peace; but now no less
Than fell despair goads boldly to presume.
Of reckless ravings, petulant and wild,
'Tis thou, not I, oh Love, the guilt must bear,
Who thus dost every power of thought perplex,
So that to airy nothings, like a child,
And worse than airy nothings, I repair—
Oh, pardon thou who thus my heart dost vex.

SONNET XXXVII.

TO SOLITUDE.

In solitude
What happiness?—Who can enjoy alone?
Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?

3d February, 1807.

Oh Solitude, let him thy aid implore,
Whose o'erwrought soul the busy world hath tired;
And oft thou'rt wisely wooed by him inspired
With taste, and learning's independent lore.
But, Solitude, thou art a friend no more,
To him, who, with a hopeless passion fired,
To brood unmarked, incautious, hath retired
On joys whose stings remain, whose sweets are o'er.
Then, Solitude, thou soft but dangerous power,
Who charm'st the enthusiast with insidious rest,
Thy silent days unnerve, relax;—and drest
In dire illusion, comes thy loneliest hour!
The cheerful Spirit would not be thy guest!
And Frenzy clasps the wretched in thy bower.

SONNET XXXVIII.

TO SOLITUDE.

3d February, 1807.

BETTER the boisterous tide of life to stem,
  Than dwell on Love's enervating delight;
Better to fret thy spirits in the game
  Of interest or ambition, than to blight
  Thy youth's first vigorous promise; bid the night
Of disappointment shroud thy noteless name;
  Than to a cankering foe yield up the right
Of all those thoughts that pledged thy course to fame.
  Since happiness evades our mortal eye,
Bear we the station firmly heaven assigned!
Ye melting visions that relax the mind
  Begone! ye promise peace—but we must buy
  Our peace on earth with arduous victory
O'er all that Passion to her heart would bind.

SONNET XXXIX.

TO SOLITUDE.

4th February, 1807.

Oh, Solitude, thou hast no moderate pain!
  Thy griefs are cureless; it were far more wise
  To chase of busy life the vanities
And fretting incidents, than court thy reign
Of deep, profoundest gloom. Alas, in vain
  Ye seek for peace whose *least sensations* rise
  Above the cold *heart's loftiest ecstacies,*
By stern proscription of amusement's train.
  Better to toil in bleak life's thorny field;
Be galled by interruptions that estrange
Thy thoughts from what thou art; than when the range
  Of outward forms withdraw, till then concealed,
  To find an inward chaos that will yield
To nought save fortune, time, and place, and change.

SONNET XL.

Inserted in a Novel, written by the author, printed, but not published, called "Isabel."

27th July, 1807.

No ear shall ever hear my source of woe;
No heart shall e'er conceive the pang I feel;
None but the Almighty power the wound can heal,
Which prompts my bosom's agonizing throe!
O ye, so eloquent in sorrow, know
Grief is not grief when language may reveal;
He is the man of grief who must conceal
Thoughts that, like spectres, trackless come and go.
Senses of ear, and eye, and touch, ye raise
An insurrection through my inmost soul;
Yet o'er that soul the law of duty sways
With absolute, invincible control.
Oh Virtue, let me cease to love thy ways!
Or bid these tides of passion cease to roll!

SONNET XLI.

29th Sept. 1807.

LET those to whom Love ne'er his raptures dealt
Despise his power;—dead to the thrilling sense,
The dear infatuating influence,
With which the stricken breast is doomed to melt.
Let those not talk of love, who have not knelt
In supplicating anguish so intense
That Grief could not conceive a recompense
In all the stores of life for what it felt.
If thou hast suffer'd thus, thy God implore
To teach thy thought devotion's ardent aim;
For all thy days of happiness are o'er
If thou confidest in an earthly flame.
Heaven grant the infinite of thought may find
Him who alone can fill the heights and depths of mind.

SONNET XLII.

Written 29th Sept. 1807.

THOU speakest well! Imagination owes
All to herself. To trifles light and vain
She gives amazing stress of joy and pain;
And sometimes, mighty in her own repose,
Removeth mountains, that impending rose
To check her onward path! Creation's reign,
Touched by her magic wand, brings forth a train
Of playful sprites, or ghosts foreboding woes;
A world to all, save him that sees, unknown!
In summer's blissful noon strange voices swell;
In night's deep silence, whence that bursting groan?
These, and a thousand shapes, and sounds that dwell
With Fancy, are exclusively their own,
Loved by the Priestess of the Magic Cell.

SONNET XLIII.

Inserted in a Novel, written by the Author, printed, but not published, called "Isabel."

1st Oct. 1807.

If, as the mystics say, grace from above
More frequent dawns while tears of anguish roll,
Wrestling with passions of the fallen soul,
There might be consolation thus to prove
An inward torment; thus, like Noah's dove,
To know no resting-place from grief's control;
No sheltered spot where memory doth not toll
The knell of sorrow for some severed love.
But if an idle anguish desecrate
From every pure and intellectual aim,
The abode of thought, the temple of the mind,
What but despair and blasphemy await?—
Religion, come, in Patience' holy name,
The self-abandon'd heart thou'rt pledged to bind.*

* He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

SONNET XLIV.

Two Sketches attempted, which will only be understood well by him who acknowledges their likeness to himself.

1st Oct. 1807.

HARD is his lot, who wheresoe'er he turns,
No fellow-feeling finds! whom social glee
Never exhilarates; whose heart ne'er burns
With infant loves;—nor tears of sympathy,
Nor playful smiles,—to other men as free
As air or light of heaven—are his; who yearns
With impotent, and pining jealousy,
As other men appear to seem and be,
While mockery's withering grin the novice spurns;
And sleek prosperity's unthinking sneer
Dashes the trembling effort ere matur'd:—
Shrinks the chill'd baffled heart, as if the fear
Of unforgiven guilt, and unabjur'd
Pursued;—for self-applause,* with healthful cheer,
Ne'er comes where mental misery is endured.

* Madame de Staël says somewhere, "*Les grands maux portent leur trouble jusques dans la conscience.*"

SONNET XLV.

1st Oct. 1807.

SEE this worn wretch amid the giddy throng,
  Feeble and timid: watch his anxious look:
  That mystery of care the world mistook
For senselessness!—Now bursts the festive song!
Pressed in his memory by a cruel wrong,
  And blasting misery of mind which shook
  The powers of life, so that he cannot brook
The trophies that to social mirth belong.
  If thou hast never breath'd, though blest with ease
And intellect, the unavailing prayer,
  The idle longing, to surrender these,
And other rare pretensions,—so thy share
  In *nature's common* stores, and *powers to please,*
Were once allowed,—thou knowest not despair.

SONNET XLVI.

1st Oct. 1807.

"WHY should'st thou ever strike the mournful string?"
The world will say. Because that string repeats
A tale responsive to my soul, that cheats
My inward grief, by outward sounds that bring
Brief alienation. Thus for those I sing
Whose kindred thoughts on kindred themes may range;
Whom no extreme transition could estrange
From secret disappointment's festering sting.
Better t' associate *powers of thought* with *woe*,
To dress her in the scanty remnants left
Of fancy, grace, and beauty, than bereft
Of all alleviation, bid her go,—
As inadmissible to claim a share
In sympathy,—to madness and despair.

SONNET XLVII.

1st Oct. 1807.

'TWERE like a dear lov'd long lost friend regain'd
When least expected, in thy solitude
To hear a voice which fits thy pensive mood:
Men of the world, who joy's full cup have drain'd,
Repress the sneer; nor selfishly arraigned,
Miscall each sentiment not understood:
There are, like me, who life's gay scenes have viewed,
In sorrow's discipline too early trained.
How oft have arid thought, and black despair,
Which, numb'd by sorrow's iron guardian *pride*,
Would never yield to grief *personified*,—
Seduced to tears—that long congealed had dwelt
In cold repression, thus been mollified,
When plaintive numbers breathed emotions felt.

SONNET XLVIII.

1st Oct. 1807.

COME, Poesy, celestial power, and bring
Thy genial train of visionary joys!
Raise my sad heart from sorrow that destroys;
And gnawing cares that check the salient spring
Of genius:—come, and teach me how to sing:
The world by me unenvied with its toys,
The world amused by vanity and noise,
And, pledged to interest, universal king.
Recall the time when Fancy yet was young,
And fresh affection shed the generous tear;
When falsehood was a stranger to my tongue,
And vice, yet undetected, to mine ear,
The dirge of murdered hope had not yet sung:
Oh come, and rescue me from anxious fear!

SONNET XLIX.

IN THE CHARACTER OF ST. PREUX.

Suggested by reading, in the Heloise of Rousseau, the description of the Heroine of his Tale and St. Preux visiting, by means of an excursion by water, the rocks of Meillerie.

Oct. 2nd, 1807.

SAILING at ease along that placid lake,
It seemed as all the world were left behind;
The universe was centred in my mind;
And what an universe was there to make
Strange stir and tumult: fancy was awake,
And thoughts of love and joy throbb'd quick the wind
Soothingly breathed; and mellowing beam assigned
To autumn, raised such notes from bush and brake,
That every object made the sense to ache,
In Nature's most voluptuous mood combin'd

For sailing thus along that placid tide,
  Dead to the world, the world unheeding me,
  While hopeless love in bleeding misery
Throbbed in my heart, fain would despair have tried
  'Mid whelming waves, the wretches latest cure—
  But conscience whisper'd, "Thou must yet endure."*

* The author is aware that in this little composition, he has exceeded the warrant allowed to the structure of the sonnet in the number of lines of which it consists; but he takes the liberty, nevertheless, as it is more like a sonnet than any thing else, of classing it with compositions so entitled; and he hopes that, lost in a crowd, its overwieldiness of bulk will scarcely be perceived, where it has so many near relations at least,

Facies non omnibus una
Nec diversa tamen, qualis decet esse sororum,

who, he fears, have each of them their respective blemishes.

SONNET L.

2nd Oct. 1807.

WHETHER thou smile or frown, thou beauteous face,
Thy charms alike possess my throbbing heart,
Nor canst thou gesture, look, or word impart
Fraught not with magic of enchanting grace:
Oh, could I once thy lovely form embrace!
Die on thy lips, and, as fierce raptures dart,
Breathe sighs that bid the mutual soul depart!
And with keen glances, keener glances chase!
It may not be, Oh Love!—Thou gavest to me
A heart too prone thy raptures to adore!
The touch, the look, the sigh, are mine no more!
Love is departed, and in agony
The infatuated spirit must deplore
That after love no other joy can be.

SONNET LI.

TO MISS ——.

Oct. 4, 1807.

Oh sentiment, in thy immortal glow,
  Our daily life with aspect new is seen,
  Thine is the touch discriminating, keen!
In persons, things, thou various shades dost know
Which to mere intellect could not bestow
  A self-amusing topic: blank, I ween,
  Save to the initiate mind, thy busiest scene,
Filled with affections, fears, and joy, and woe.
  But, ah! how seldom must the trembling sense,
By thee inspir'd, a heart responsive find!
  How many to thy favours make pretence!
But rarely art thou, bashful instinct, kind,
  Where Modesty with virgin influence
Hides not, with jealous care, her stores of mind!

SONNET LII.

TO MISS ——.

Oct. 4, 1807.

ONCE more, oh sentiment, I strike my lyre,
  Thy powers to sing.—To all the stores of art
  Thou dost entrancing dignity impart!
To painting, music, poesy, thy fire
  Doth give a fascinating influence:
Forms, sounds, and words, subordinate to thee,
Rise to a more imperious agency,
  Ineffable in grace and eloquence.
Come not with death, oh sentiment! nor come
  With disappointment, sorrow, and disease!
Then dim the impassioned eye, the tongue is dumb
  Where fascination played her witcheries.
Then *heaviest ills* the *loftiest* bosom numb,
  Since streams *most copious* on that *bosom* freeze.

SONNET LIII.

To her who will understand this, and the two preceding ones.

4th Oct. 1807.

To her I bring these trophies of thy reign,
  Oh sentiment! thy most beloved child!
  Soft is her look, as if an angel smiled;
And musical her voice, as when the strain
Of shepherd's flute along the twilight plain
  Is heard from far; her step is calm and mild:
  Pride, and persuasive grace, seem reconciled
In her, to consummate what poets feign.
  To thee I bring these trophies, beauteous form!
Round whom taste, elegance, and fancy breathe,
  To fashion's courtly ease you add the charm,
To deem no thing that hath a heart beneath
  Solicitous benignity!—Hence, warm
With partial thoughts, I twine the unworthy wreathe.

SONNET LIV.

Written after a Walk by Rydal Water, Westmoreland, in time of War.

7th Oct. 1807.

In such a day how calm and mild this scene,
Made for poetic thought. The woods display'd
Of brown and yellow every varying shade:
And here and there the fresh and lingering green
Told yet of summer and her days serene,
Too soon departed! Fading fern array'd
The russet hills; and, as faint sun-gleams stray'd,
In warmer hues th' upland slopes were seen.
Oh, beauteous aspect of a beauteous world!
Mournful to think how little understood!
In man's distemper'd heart hath frenzy hurl'd
Envenom'd shafts! The sword, defil'd with blood,
Lays waste the earth: and o'er the ocean flood
The crimson flag of discord is unfurl'd.

SONNET LV.

Written after seeing Rydal Lake.

8th Oct. 1807.

WILD is the lake, dark in autumnal gloom!
And white its surf rolls in the silvery gleam;
Swift lights that flit like phantoms in a dream,
Or white robed spirits hovering o'er a tomb
The shades of autumn fitfully illume.
The plaintive winds now swelling in a stream
Of deep-toned music, now subsiding, seem
To frame a dirge for Nature's faded bloom.
The yellow leaf whirls frequent in the air;
From the full floating clouds propitious showers,
As with an infant's playfulness repair
To variegate the visionary hours:
The elements at work exhaust their powers,
From the bard's heart, to dissipate all care.

SONNET LVI.

8th Oct. 1807.

WHENCE dost thou spring, thou visionary sound,
Heard by my hearth, what time the curtain hides
The external world, where sable night abides?
Thy source unseen, though Fancy in her round,
Scorning the illumin'd parlour's scanty bound
Springs to the waste o'er which thy murmur glides,
Pictures the mountain, or the roaring tides
Whose haunts thou visitest with voice profound.
Cease not thy music, when, at hour of sleep,
The forms of day no longer cheat my woes;
When slumber's stealing powers mine eye-lids close,
Still let thy melodies, so soft and deep,
A soothing presage bring, that peace shall keep
My bosom, rocked by Nature to repose.

SONNET LVII.

Inserted in a Novel, written by the Author, called "Isabel."

14th Oct. 1807.

My God! I lift my sorrowing voice to thee!
I ask not health, prosperity, or fame,
Joy, life, whate'er of good the thought can frame:
I ask the gift of faith, when misery
Must be my lot, that I may bend the knee,
And feel, great God, that whence my misery came,
From the same source alone my heart can claim
That which from mental pangs can set me free!
Yes, Father! let me see thy hand in grief,
And grief to me shall be as comfort dear!
But if, in wisdom, thou refuse to hear,
If of my trials darkened faith be chief,
Let resignation, with a holy fear,
Refuse presumptuous, premature relief.

SONNET LVIII.

Descriptive as well as commemorative of a place belonging to the eldest Brother of the Author's Father; a place in which were spent many of the happiest Hours of his Youth.

19*th Oct.* 1807.

BELOVED spot, ere sleep mine eyes did close
On last night's pillow, thy remembered scene,
Thy shrubbery, avenue, and daisied green,
Thy teeming garden, farm, and orchard rose
With many a thought of what I once had been!
What beauty, and what joy didst thou disclose!
What hopes, what loves, what friendships, and what woes!
What tide of life thy busy range has seen!
Now silent all, deserted! Memory's thought
Can never from that moment* be estrang'd,
When the lov'd progeny, in order rang'd,

* The Uncle and Aunt of the Author had sixteen children, seven sons and nine daughters, and most of them so far remarkable for beauty of person, that, when collected together, the family groupe probably could scarce-

The parent's glance of heartfelt triumph caught!
Six graceful forms the hand of death hath chang'd,
And to thy once gay bowers are fear and sorrow brought.

ly be rivalled in that respect. The Author once in his life saw each individual of them marshalled according to their age:—it is to this circumstance, and to the subsequent death of six of the family, all unexpectedly, and in quick succession one after the other, carried off in the bloom of life, that the latter part of the Sonnet alludes.

SONNET LIX.

14th Nov. 1807.

WHERE is that crowd of friends that could dispense
Refreshing rapture to life's sunny morn?
Where are those loves, affections, that are born
Of freedom, sentiment, and confidence?
'Tis silent all! a blank to every sense!
The energy of life, that used to scorn
The rule of pale experience, is withdrawn!
That power ere while so buoyant and intense!
Yet there is *One* who faithful still remains,
Who loves my solitude, as once she lov'd
My cheer in social life: who loves my joy,
Nor flies my couch when gnawing sickness reigns:
She, like the minister of heaven, hath prov'd
That "time and chance" can true love ne'er destroy.

SONNET LX.

14th Nov. 1807.

LET him who runs of active life the race
  Despise the Muses: let him, with strong mind,
  Appropriate objects for each passion find:
Yet are there some, who, doomed to quit the chase
Of Interest, or Ambition, whose slow pace
  Of languid being to despair resigned,
  Could not support the interdict assign'd
To sequestration, with averted face
  Did the loved Muses frown on their bleak lot:
For *They* can give to solitude a power,
Can whisper soothings in the midnight hour;
  And raise gay fictions where true joy is not!
The copious dews of sentiment can shower
  On Nature's bleakest, most deserted spot!

SONNET LXI.

14th November, 1807.

SAY, what is friendship but true sympathy
Of kindred minds, where mutual feeling burns;
Where cordial warmth the cordial warmth returns,
And lightens up the heart-conveying eye?
And how do Interest, and Vanity,
Folly, and fear of solitude, by turns,
Hypocrisy that speedily discerns
The worth of borrowed reputation, try
To emulate thy pure consoling flame!
Oh Friendship, with this war of fiends oppress'd,
Where dost thou keep thy soul's serenity?
I know thy power will zealously disclaim
Divided incense.—Let *my heart* be blest!—
For I would sacrifice my *all* to Thee!

SONNET LXII.

On the Death of Mr. Robert Lloyd, who, together with a Brother married, both of them leaving a Widow, the former with four, and the latter with three Children, and a Sister unmarried, died each of them of Fevers, in the short space of three weeks.

Written 15*th November*, 1811.

My friend, my brother, no more shall I see
That face affectionate, that face benign,
Those eyes where tenderness did always shine,
Whene'er they turned their gentle beams on me.
If ever Faith, and Generosity,
Love, and Benevolence almost divine,
Forgetfulness of Self, Humility,
Blessed human nature;—Robert, they were thine!
Thy smile,—I see it now,—was kind and sweet
As the first dawnings of an April morn:
Thy warm solicitude each wish to meet,
And catch the struggling meaning ere 'twas born,
No words can emulate! Who o'er thy urn,
Lost friend, like him who lov'd thee most, should mourn?

SONNET LXIII.

The same Subject continued; addressed to Mrs. Robert Lloyd.

15th November, 1811.

THOU mourner desolate, what can I say
To dry those tears which fall for him that's gone?
I cannot bid thee hope that on life's way
A human counterpart will e'er be known,
No, never will a pure angelic ray
Like that, which with a sweetness all his own,
His dear face lighted,—never will a tone
Of such solicitude,—thy love repay!—
Yet still thy soul communion sweet may hold,
Still may his tenderness engross thy thought!
And though those eyes are dim, those lips are cold,
With Love's warm eloquence divinely fraught,
Still 'tis a *holier privilege* to grieve
For Him, than with a less *pure friend* to live!

SONNET LXIV.

Written 15th November, 1811.

THE following Sonnet was written after having finished, in Westmoreland, a translation of the Metamorphoses of Ovid into English verse, which the Author began six years before in Warwickshire; and in order to facilitate the performance of which his brother kindly lent him the use of an apartment in his house, as being in a situation less interrupted by noise than the one in which he was stationed.

THIS morn as dismal as the dismal theme,
  Which weighs my bosom when I think on thee:
  This morning shrouded in obscurity
Of winds, and blustering rain, and vapours dim;
This morn, with weary eye, and languid limb,
  The task is done of mimic poesy.
  To whom, dear friend, to whose kind sympathy,
When in my breast first stirred the wayward whim,

Can I ascribe assistance?—Thou art gone!—
Thou first whene'er my frail and suffering mind
Some effort made, with sweetness all thy own,
And flattering promptitude most bland and kind,
To gratulate my toils of little worth!—
Thou *last* to blame!—Thou *first* to hail their birth!

SONNET LXV.

The same Subject continued.

Written 15*th November*, 1811.

No, thou wert never known, wert never loved,
As heart like thine should have been lov'd and known,
Save by some life-long friends who now must groan
That they, when thou didst live, so useless proved
The cup of life to sweeten! Friend removed
From many a pang which hearts like thine alone
Can feel; which, with acuteness all thy own,
Alas! thou feltest! Brother, Friend approved,
Farewell! I do not seek with hand profane,
The veil that o'er thy heart was drawn to rend:
Thou wert a hidden treasure which the vain,
The proud, the worldly could not comprehend.
I mourn for thee, thou *ne'er to be forgot!*
Yet *more* for those *who loved*, and *see thee not!*

SONNET LXVI.

On the Death of Mr. Thomas Lloyd, who died within three weeks of the time when the subject of the last four Sonnets breathed his last.

25th December, 1811.

If manly honour, and a soul sincere,
  Fidelity with delicacy joined,
  Immaculate transparency of mind,
And worth too sensitive for this low sphere;
If Thomas, all the virtues that are dear
  In scenes domestic, fortitude resigned,
  Manners by native elegance refined,
May claim, when lost, the Muse's tuneful tear;
Say, who may more imperiously pretend,
As husband, brother, father, son, and friend,
  Than thee, to such recording eulogy?
Yet those thy silent, suffering worth, who knew,
Must think this eulogy, though too, too true,
  Less emblematic than dumb Grief of thee.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Poems, with a great number of others, had been set aside by the Author, as unworthy of publication; but as he was inclined to think rather more favourably of these than of the others, they had been transcribed in order to be submitted to a friend, on whose judgment the Author relies much more implicitly than on his own, before he finally decided as to what Poems should, and what should not, be introduced into his Volume. However, this friend was on a journey at the critical moment; and the Author preferred rejecting these Poems, to printing them from his own opinion. Before the last proof sheet of this little Volume was completed, another friend, on whom the Author thought he could equally rely, visited him; and on the following Poems being submitted to him, gave it as his opinion, that these might be retained without impropriety.

There would not have been any necessity for this little explanatory remark, had not the other Poems in this Volume, with the exception of those on the Death of Priscilla Farmer, been arranged in the order in which they were written as to time: most of these, on the other hand, as the reader will perceive by comparing dates, are coeval with his earliest productions.

METAPHYSICAL SONNET I.

Written 1794.

My soul's an atom in the world of mind,
  Hurl'd from its centre by some adverse storm;
The attraction's gone, its movements that confin'd
  The impulse fled, that urged it to perform
Its destined office. Wandering through the void,
  Each due attrition, each excitement dead,
Its moral aim and action seem destroyed,
  And its *existence*, like its *functions*, fled.
Love was the parent orb from whence it drew
  Its moral being, hope its active force;
But Love's dear sun shall never shine anew;
  Nor Hope again direct my wandering course!
My life is nothing to mankind!—To me
'Tis worse than nothing! *'Tis all agony!*

SONNET II.

TO A PRIMROSE.

1795.

COME, simple floweret of the paly leaf!
With yellow eye, and stalk of downy green,
Though mild thy lustre, though thy days are brief,
Oh, come and decorate my cottage scene!
For thee, I'll rear a bank where softest moss,
And tenderest grass shall carelessly combine;
No haughty flower shall shine in gaudy gloss,
But azure violets mix their buds with thine.
Far, far away, each keener wind shall fly,
Each threatening tempest of the early year!
Thy fostering gale shall be the lover's sigh!
The dew that gems thy bud the lover's tear!
And ere thou diest, pale flower, thou'lt gain the praise
To have soothed the bard, and to have inspir'd his lays.

SONNET III.

TO THE RIVER EMONT.

1795.

SWEET, simple stream, the shallow waves that glide
In peaceful murmurs o'er thy rocky bed;
Sweet, simple stream, the gleams of eventide
That on thy banks their mellowing lustre shed;
Befit the temper of my restless mind!—
For, while I hear thy waves, and see the gleam,
Of latest eve, afar from human kind,
To linger here unknown, I fondly dream.
I snatch my flute, and breathe a softened lay;
Then melting, view it as an *only friend;*
And oft I wonder much, that while so gay,
And all unthinking, *others* onward wend,
I here should sadly linger, and rejoice
To hear a lone stream, or the flute's soft voice!—

SONNET IV.

TO LOCH-LOMOND.

Aug. 1795.

LOMOND, thy rich and variegated scene,
  Fantastic now, now dignified, severe;
Thy tufted underwood, of darker green,
  Thine arrowy pines that mock the rolling year;
Thy soft diversity of sweeping bays,
  Fringed with each shrub, and edged with tenderest turf,
Where, as the attenuated north-gale plays,
  The wild flowers mingle with the harmless surf:
Thy long protracted lake, expansive now,—
  Boldly diversified with wood-crowned Isles,—
Imprisoned now by rocks, on whose stern brow,
  Clad with cold heath, the summer scarcely smiles,
I welcome fearfully;—and hail in thee
The wildest shapings of sublimity.

SONNET V.

TO THE SABBATH.

1796.

Ah! quiet day, I oft recall the time,
When I did chase my childish sluggishness,
The "rear of darkness lingering still," to dress
In due sort for thy coming; the first chime
Of blithesome bells, that ushered in thy morn,
Carolled to me of rest, and simplest mirth:
'Twas then all happiness on the wide earth
To gaze!—I little dreamt that man was born
For aught but wholesome toil, and holiest praise,
Thanking that God who made him to rejoice!
But, I am changed now! nor could I raise
My sunken spirit at thy well known voice;
But that thou seemest soothingly to say,
"Look up poor mourner, to a *better day*."

SONNET VI.

Written July, 1796.

Now glares the proud sun on the thirsty street,
Where the shrunk, swarthy mendicant implores
Some scanty pittance from the o'erflowing stores
Of those that flutter by. How little meet
Is it for fellow mortals thus to greet!
This with an humble gesture that adores;
That with a flinty threat or sneer, that pours
A poison to the soul!—Poor wretch, how sweet
To bind some balsam on thy heart's keen wound!
To make thee smile, and raise thee to the rank
That man should hold, wherever man is found!—
But, Oh, this may not be!—Thou canst but thank
Him who would succour thee!—Be this my meed!—
And thy *rich thanks* shall soothe a *heart in need!*

THE DEAD FRIEND.

Burton, August, 1797.

When I am quiet, and my centred soul
Rests from its mortal working, it has seem'd
As though the dead friend liv'd again, so sweet
To me has been her memory. Evermore
Would I be so o'ertaken: for my tears
Were tears of pleasantness, and all my sighs
O'erflowings of affection! Hallow'd spirit,
Fain would I cherish the belief that thou
Guidest my onward feet, cleansest my heart
From every fleshly thought. Or when I muse
In sacred solitude, or when abroad
I ponder on my desultory way;
Or when in active life I force myself
To wear the semblance which my heart not owns,
I love to think that thou dost mingle still
The holy leav'nings of inbreathed love
With all my frail and unregenerate thoughts.
The dear remembrance of thy kindled eye

When it met mine; thy grasp of tenderness;
Thy mute expression of anxiety
When I was sore perplex'd; thy awful tones,
Full, holy, and melodious, that inclin'd
My difficult ear, and drew my wayward heart
"To the better cause:" all these live o'er again,
And fill the lonely hour with such strange shades
Of past existence, that I seem to greet
My former self, and be again that child
Whom thou didst love so well, who knew so well
The value of that love!

O thou wast all
To me!—the vacancy which thou hast left
No mortal may fill up; it is a part
To thee and Heaven devoted! I would there
Treasure each manlier truth, whose rudiment
I learn'd from thee, best parent! Every form
Of beauty, every loftier thought, and all
The unshap'd energies which I may win
To bright perfection's aim; these visitants
Alone, that sanctuary of my inmost soul
Shall pierce, where thou dost dwell.

And when mankind
Deem hardly of my doings, I will turn

To thee, best friend! And if the time should come
When all forsake me, if at that lone hour,
That dreary pause of mental solitude,
On thy invisible solace I may lean,
'Twill fill my bosom till it overflows;
For thou wast pure, and sternly virtuous,
Yet tender and affectionate. Thy will
Was holy and unbending; yet that will
Was mild in act; pursuing rigidly,
With singleness of soul, the work that Heaven
Had giv'n thee to perform; yet bearing ever
Thy lofty calling with so meek a mien,
That all with mute involuntary awe
Felt ere they call'd thee good! Farewell, and raise
My backward heart to somewhat of the state
Hallowing thy mortal pilgrimage, that so
In happier worlds than this we meet again!

TRANSLATIONS.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO

The Translations.

THE following stories from Ovid, which are now printed as specimens of a translation of his Metamorphoses, completed by the Author, are not intended to be literally rendered from the Latin: it has been the object of the Author, allowing for the dissimilarity of the Latin and English languages, to give an impression to readers in the latter analogous to that which the original might be supposed to give to those in the former; and he has always been particularly careful not to suffer any peculiar beauties of sentiment, description, or phraseology to escape his notice.

The Metamorphoses in the original are written in a style highly artificial: the Author, therefore, in his translation has rather preferred the adopting a smooth and even versification, to the more

loose, easy, and natural one, which latterly has been so much in vogue.

The great merits of Ovid in the work now referred to, are, a developement of an exquisite sense of physical beauty; highly decorated, and sometimes almost voluptuous description: where the subject requires it, as in the Death of Hercules, and the contest of Ulysses and Ajax for the arms of Achilles, a command of great strength of language; and an almost unrivalled power of describing the passions in a state of oscillation, or rather the feelings of the mind, when strongly solicited by vehement passion to forego deeply rooted principle. As he is more metaphysical than most of the Latin poets, so perhaps in his writings more than in almost any of those of the others, passages frequently occur apposite to the different experiences of life, and which the reader would be desirous to treasure in his memory.

The Author might add, that he was, in some measure, induced to print a few of the stories from Ovid, together with his own Poems, from the consideration that the latter are so exclusively of a sentimental and meditative cast, that he thought the former might afford no unacceptable variety to the volume to some readers; especially

to those who seek for narratives in poetical composition. On the other hand, he has been staggered with regard to publishing the translation as a whole, except indeed a considerable part of it should be re-written, from the consciousness, that, in those parts of the performance where, from the dryness of the subject, it is most difficult to do well, his has been more than rivalled, nay, much outdone, by that of Mr. Orger, which a few years ago appeared in numbers, which, though compleated, never seems to have attracted the attention of which it was worthy.

It gives the Author pleasure to have so appropriate an opportunity of offering his humble commendation—for commendation indeed is but a mite thrown into the scale of applause, when it comes from one whose name is so little known, and so utterly unestablished—to a fellow-labourer in a task, which, in the instance alluded to, was executed so much to the credit of him who undertook it.

THE DEATH OF HERCULES.

FROM THE NINTH BOOK OF THE METAMORPHOSES OF OVID.

But thou, oh Nessus, tempted to betray
Thy trust, most signally didst penance pay
For Dejanira's love, when the swift dart
Of her late trusting Lord transpierced thy heart.
For she, with Hercules, who sought once more
His Father's walls, came to Evenus' shore.
The eddying river, swelled by wintry rains,
Obstructs their progress, deluging the plains.
Here Nessus flatter'd them with specious words,
Nessus, strong-limb'd, acquainted with the fords;
And thus accosted Jove's intrepid son,
Who, fearless, trembled for his spouse alone.
" This woman, oh Alcides, on yon strand,
" By my assistance, shall securely stand.
" In swimming try thy strength." The friendly prayer
Hercules heard, confiding: to his care

Deïanira, pale with terror, gave,
Who feared alike the Centaur, and the wave.
Meantime Alcides to the other side
His club and curved bow threw across the tide;
And though the quiver's weight increased his toil,
And the Nemæan lion's shaggy spoil,
" Since I begin," he cries, " fixed fate decrees
" Evenus shall submit to Hercules."
Nor does he hesitate, nor seek its course
Where flows the stream with mitigated force;
But all its power he braves with might intense,
Where boil its waves with added turbulence.
Now had the Hero gained the further shore,
And grasped the massy club and bow once more,
When recognizing his wife's voice, he cried
To Nessus, who had seized upon his bride,
His trust betraying,—" What vain confidence
" Of swiftness prompts thee to this violence?
" Oh biform ravisher, thy prey resign,
" Nor claims usurp to what alone is mine.
" If I cannot persuade to what is just,
" Ixïon well might frighten lawless lust.
" Yet though thou trustest to thy biform shape,
" Thou shalt not with impunity escape.
" Swiftness shall not, but wounds shall overtake:"
And his exploit made good the words he spake.

His flying back he wounded with the dart,
The barbed hook projected from his heart.
The dart extracted, from each gaping sore,
Mixed with Lernæan poison, gushed the gore.
This Nessus caught.—"Nor unrevenged I
die,"
He muttered in a stern soliloquy.
He dips a vestment in the poisoned stream,
And thus resenting his abortive scheme,
Gave it the dame, and told her it would prove
A talisman of everlasting love.

The interval is long.—To every state
Were known Alcides' fame, and Juno's hate.
And now the hero from Œchalia came,
With conquest crowned, and blessed with
brighter fame.
And altars to Cenœan Jove he raised,
Which on the Euböic promontory blazed;
When Fame, who loves to add false things to
true,
From sources small, make great events ensue,
Told Deïanira, that Amphitryon's son,
To Love's soft joys by Iole was won.
Love's jealousy first realized her fears;
Alarmed at his inconstancy, in tears

She found a refuge; having thus indulged
Her grief, in words she thus that grief divulged:
" Shall the adulteress in my tears rejoice?
" Since she approaches, some new artifice,
" While yet I may, my injuries must bested,
" And while no other occupies my bed.
" Shall I be silent, or shall I complain,
" Here tarry, or seek Calydon again?
" Say, shall I abdicate this home once dear,
" Or shall I blast their bliss by staying here?
" What if, Oh Meleager! I pursue
" The thought, that, as thy sister, I will do
" That which befits my birth to thine allied,
" That which befits the pang of outraged pride;
" And that to shew what deeds from woe can start,
" I plunge my dagger in my rival's heart?"
By different projects tossed, she long demurred;
At last to send the vestment she preferred,
With Nessus' blood imbued; which might restore
Vigour to alienated love once more.
She gave, unconscious what she would bestow,
To Lichas, ignorant as herself, her woe,
And, suffering wretch, with many a bland word,
Commands that he should give it to his Lord.

The unconscious Hero took it, and imbued
His form with poison of Lernæan brood.
He prayed, while flames arise by incense fed,
And wine from cups on marble altars shed.
The power of poison, vivified by heat,
Thrilled in each vein, in every artery beat.
While Nature the fierce conflict could sustain,
His wonted fortitude concealed the pain;
But, when his pangs o'er patience did prevail,
The altars he threw down, and with his wail
Filled woody Œta. Now, without delay,
He tries the deadly vest to tear away;
And the adhesive skin, where'er he tries,
And mangled flesh, bespeak his agonies;
And, horrible to tell, the robe still clings,
Still its tenacity around him flings;
Or his torn limbs, and mighty bones laid bare,
Attest the pangs of impotent despair.
As red-hot steel dipped in the gelid flood,
Hissed, and, with ardent poison, boiled his blood.
His sufferings knew no bounds. The flames devour
His cracking heart-strings with their cruel power;
Cœrulean moisture all his limbs distain,
His bursting nerves are audible with pain.

Each shrivelled arm he stretches to the skies,
While the dire pest his marrow liquefies.
" Oh Juno !" he exclaims, " feed on my woes,
" Banquet on my unutterable throes,
" Glut thy revenge !—And, if a foe may be
" Compassioned, (for I am a foe to thee,)
" Take my obnoxious life, sick with turmoils,
" And cruel anguish, born for pityless toils.
" Death were deliverance now !—Such remedy
" 'Twould well become a step-dame to apply.
" Have I for such rewards Busiris slain,
" Who smeared with strangers' blood the Egyptian fane ?
" For such, Antæus severed from the earth,
" Which at once nurtured him, and gave him birth ?
" Did I Iberia's triform monster dread,
" Geryon? or Cerberus with the three-fold head?
" Was it not ye, my hands, the horns that tore
" From off the mighty bull ? And ye that bore
" To the Stymphalian streams, and Elis, aid,
" And the Parthenian groves ? Are ye thus paid,
" Since ye the sword-belt to your faithless lord,
" Embossed with Thermodontian gold, restored ?

"Since of the Hesperian apples badly kept,
"The dragon ye despoiled, who never slept?
"Nor could the Centaurs, nor the boar withstand,
"Plague of Arcadia, this avenging hand!
"Did it avert the savage Hydra's doom,
"To increase by loss, and two-fold strength resume?
"What? When, the Thracian horses fat with blood,
"And stables full of mangled limbs, I viewed,
"Were not they, soon as seen, felled by my sword,
"Their fierceness conquered, and their fiercer lord?
"Say, did this arm Nemæa's lion spare?
"Say, did this neck the heavens refuse to bear?
"Jove's cruel spouse could no more labours plan,
"My swift performance e'en her hate outran.

"But now a new plague threatens, which defies
"Valour's strong arms, or virtue's energies;
"Through every member steals its poisonous breath,
"My lungs convulsed, toil with the throes of death.

" Meanwhile Eurystheus flourishes! Great Jove,
" And still they say that there are Gods above!"

E'en as a tyger pierced with hunting darts,
Infuriate *he* through lofty Œta starts:
E'en as the beast doth whet his vengeful fangs,
He seeks the unconscious author of his pangs:
* Oft did he groan, and often did he roar,
Oft did he welter in his boiling gore;
His cruel robe oft tried to rend in vain,
Trees he laid prostrate with the power of pain;
He warred with mountains, and the heavens defied,
Awful in death as in his days of pride.

Lichas, beneath a rocky height he spies,
Trembling, and shrinking from his master's eyes;

* The following would be a more literal translation, with the exception of the words *in italics*, of the following passage; but, for obvious reasons, the Author has chosen the more free one.

Oft did he groan, and often did he roar,
His cleaving robe oft tried to rend once more;
You might behold him laying prostrate trees,
Warring with mountains, or *in agonies*
Stretching his arms to his paternal skies.

In tones as wild as maniac throes inspire,
And from despair collecting all his fire,
He cries, "Brought'st thou these instruments of woe?
"And shall the feeble lay the mighty low?"—
The servant trembled, paralyzed with fear,
Stammering excuses in his lord's deaf ear.
Alcides seized him with his potent grasp,
E'en as his master's knees he sought to clasp,
Suppliant in vain. He whirled him four times round,
And sent him to the Euböic waves profound,
Swifter than stones from battering rams rebound.
He harden'd in the aërial element;
And as they say, that showers with cold cement
Transformed to snow, or as the snow congealed,
Its softer essence to crisp hail doth yield;
So do the legends of the ancient world
Recount, that he, by rapid impulse hurled,
Became a statue in his headlong course,
Bloodless from fear, exanimate from force.—
Now in the Euböic gulf the rock remains,
And still its human symmetry retains.
Still, as if sensitive, the sailors fear
To injure its repose, and cruize too near.

For thee, thou venerated son of Jove,
Trees were cut down in Œta's loftiest grove;
Of these composed a funeral pyre was raised,
And, ere the consecrated structure blazed,
Thou gav'st to Pæan's son thy shafts and bow,
Destined once more to lay proud Ilion low;
To Pæan's son, whose hands assiduous brought
Flames, which no sooner the congeries caught,
Than on the summit of the blazing wood,
By thee the Nemeæan skin was strewed.
Prone on thy club thou laid'st thy awful head,
(Thy club last placed on thy funereal bed,)
With such complacency as might become
Guests crowned with wreaths, who crowd the festive dome.
And now, the flames diffused in every part,
Pervade the limbs, pervade the yielding heart
Of him, who with the elevated pride
Of virtue, their rapaciousness defied.
E'en Gods beheld the agonies with fear,
Of the avenger of this earthly sphere.
Whom thus great Jove with joyful face address'd,
Pleased that compassion stole from breast to breast:
"Your terror is my triumph! Powers above,
"Pleased do I witness with exulting love,

"That I am hailed as Father and as Lord,
"By tribes that gratefully obey my word!
"Nor less rejoice I that my dying son
"Hath heaven's accumulated suffrage won.
"And, since 'tis freely offered, grateful view
"This homage, indispensably his due.
"Lest in your faithful bosoms vain fears rise,
"The Œtean flames I warn you to despise;
"Who conquered all things, he shall conquer too
"Those fires ye see; Vulcan can nought subdue,
"Save his maternal part. What from me came
"Is deathless, and obnoxious to no flame.
"Him I will welcome to the blest abodes,
"And trust my will is praised by all the gods;
"Yet, if there's one that murmurs e'en in thought,
"And grudges honours, though so dearly bought,
"That one shall be constrained my son to meet,
"With face that welcomes, and with looks that greet."

The gods assented. But Olympus' Queen,
Although she heard the rest with placid mien,
With an indignant face Jove's last words heard;
Stung with reproof thus openly incurred.

Meanwhile the power of Vulcan purged away
Whate'er remained of perishable clay.
Alcides' renovated form survived,
Of all maternal elements deprived;
That form transfigured could not now be known,
And in its glories Jove's own image shone.
As when a renovated snake appears,
Freed from the accumulated slough of years;
As this luxuriates in its recent pride,
So when the son of Jove had thrown aside
Whate'er was mortal; when from earth unchained,
His better part the due ascendant gained;
August he seemed, and awful like the gods,
A worthy inmate of the blest abodes.

His sire omnipotent the hero shrouds,
In rolling majesty of hollow clouds,
Drawn in a car by steeds as swift as wind:
And 'mid the stars his final home assigned.

CEYX AND ALCYONE.

ARGUMENT.

Ceyx, king of Trachinia, had been visited by Peleus, who fled from his country in consequence of the murder of his half-brother Phocus, the son of the Nereid Psamathe. The realms of Ceyx were laid waste by a wolf sent by Psamathe, as a punishment for this reception of Peleus. Ceyx also lamented his brother Dædalion changed into a hawk by Apollo, and his niece Chione slain by Diana.

CEYX AND ALCYONE.

Ceyx meantime, on whose heart sad thoughts sate
From portents cleaving to his brother's fate,
And from succeeding ones, prepares to go
To the Clarian shrine, a pilgrim worn with woe,
That he might—solacers of human ills—
There question the *unerring oracles.*
For impious Phorbas with the Phlegyan crew,
Those who would visit sacred Delphos, slew.

Yet, first of all, most fond Alcyone,
His pious purpose he divulged to thee!
Through all thy frame a death-like tremor ran,
Thy face so lately bright, was shrunk and wan,
And tears profuse flowed down thy livid cheek,
Thrice sobs forbade, and thrice thou triedst to speak.
At last, with fond complainings broke by sighs
"What fault of mine hath changed thy mind," she cries,

" Spouse, most beloved?—Where is the care
which late
" My every wish strove to anticipate?
" And, is it come to this, that thou canst be
" At ease, and absent from Alcyone?
" That in the journey's length thou canst rejoice?
" My absence, than my presence, more thy choice?
" But yet I think, that thou by land mayest go;
" Thus *fear* will not be added to my *woe*.
" The sea and all its images I dread,
" Oft on the shore I've seen torn rafters spread,
" And cenotaphs, engraven with a name,
" Deaths, unappeased by sepulture, proclaim.
" Nor let fallacious hopes thy breast inspire,
" That *Œolus will prove to thee a sire,
" Who all the winds compresses in his cave,
" And when he wills, or calms, or lifts the wave.
" When once the boisterous storms have ventured forth,
" They treat without respect the sea and earth,
" To them is nought forbidden. Clouds they vex,
" And e'en the thunderbolts of Jove perplex.
" In my paternal home, in days of yore,
" I knew them well, oft listening to their roar.

* Œolus was, according to Ovid, the father of Alcyone.

" And, as the more I knew them, they appear'd,
" And still appear, more worthy to be feared.
" But, since no prayers thy purpose can o'er-
throw,
" And thou art certainly resolved to go,
" Take me, together with thee, spouse most
dear;
" We then shall have one lot: nor shall I fear
" Beyond what I endure: whate'er it be,
" We shall be fellow-sufferers: equally
" Shall we confront the dangers of the sea."

While poor Alcyone expressed her fears
In such words made more eloquent from tears;
Her star-born* Lord with equal pangs was moved;
Who loves himself as much as he is loved.
Yet not for this the voyage will he forbear,
Or let Alcyone the danger share.
He answers her, her timid *breast* to cheer,
With many words; yet could he not raise *there*
One thought to reconcile her to his scheme.
To these he also added this one theme,
Which as palliative might work upon,
And reconcile, the loved and loving one.
" All separation will to us seem long:
" But yet to this world if I still belong,

* Ceyx was the son of Lucifer.

" I swear to thee, by Lucifer, that ere
" Yon moon hath twice fulfilled her month's career,
" I will return to thee!"*—When thus a scope
He had given, by promised swift return, to hope,
He straightway bade the ship to be unmoored
From the harbour, and with tackle to be stored.
This saw Alcyone once more fear-stricken,
Prescient of future woes, while present thicken.†
Her husband she embraced; tears in full tide
Gushed forth; at last the wretched creature cried;
In accents most disconsolate, " farewel!"
And on the shore, with powers suspended, fell.

While Ceyx sought delay, in two-fold rows
Each mariner, impatient of repose,
Obliquely poised his oar from his strong breast,
Or clave in equal strokes the wave's curl'd crest.

She raised her streaming eyes, and saw her spouse
Stand on the curved ship; and, while time allows,

* Or,—" I swear by Lucifer's paternal sphere,
" Ere yon moon twice hath filled her month's career,
" I will again, Alcyone, be here."

† Or,—" This saw Alcyone, once more struck dumb
" With fear, as prescient of the woes to come.

In dear salute his waved hand she discerned,
Waved towards her: the signal she returned.

When now the lessening ship withdrew from shore
And the loved features she could see no more;
Yet still that ship she followed with her eyes,
Till distance, e'en the ken of love, defies;
Yet still the trembling top-sail she did view,
Or thought she viewed it, in the horizon blue:
And still her eyes drank in this little spot,*
Till distance made one universal blot;
Till hope was gone that she could longer see,
And nought remain'd but Fancy's imagery.

Yet even then the haunting form would rise,
Now fade, now swim before her aching eyes;
Till with the unreal conflict sick and faint,
Doubtful if Fancy, or if Truth, did paint

* The author is aware that, in the following lines, to the end of the next paragraph, he has amplified the sense of the original writer, but he pleads forgiveness from his readers, on the score, that though he may have departed from his prototype as respects the number of words, he has not violated that which an enlightened reader might ascribe to him, as respects the tone, character, and tendency of his ideas.

The feverish images that round her dance:
She sinks upon the shore in powerless trance.

But when the mourner raised her eyes once more,
Disconsolate she tottered from the shore;
Anxiously fond, she sought the empty bed,
And on the widowed pillow laid her head.
The tears again sprang from the room and bed,
For he that gave to them a charm was fled.

And now the ship, the furthest headland passed;
The breezes rose, and shook the creaking mast.
To the bark's side the oars now useless cling,
The sailors hoist the yard, and cheerly sing.
Slacken the cable, and unreeve the sail,
And welcome joyfully the coming gale.

Scarce had the ship half ploughed the watery way,
And either climes at equal distance lay;
When foamy-crested billows rolling white,
Gleamed through the universal gloom of night,
And the swift east wind blew with fiercer might;
"Lower the yard-arms," now the pilot cried,
"Be all the canvas to the sail-yard tied."

The adverse storm forbids him to be heard,
And crashing billows intercept each word.
Yet, of their own accord, some ply the oar,
The heaving broadside some with care explore;
Some reef the sails; some at the pumps intent,
Restore the waters to their element.
Some lower the sail-yards. While, with labour vain,
These things were done, the tempest raged amain.
The boisterous winds wage war on every side,
And mix tumultuously th' indignant tide.
Even the master of the ship betrayed,
By every look and word, a heart dismayed.
He knew not what to shun or what to will,
So much more powerful, than his art, the ill.
Discordant clamours from the seamen rise,
The creaking cables echo to their cries.
The mighty waves with mightier waves contend,
And lightnings fire the clouds, and thunders rend.
The monstrous billows touch the etherial dome,
And with the lowering clouds confound their foam:
Now yellow, mixed with boiling sands, they seem,
Now are they blacker than the Stygian stream;

And sometimes, foaming from the tempest's
shock,
Comparatively calm, they heave, and rock.
The bark, by these vicissitudes engrossed,
From wave to wave is piteously tossed.
And now aloft, as from a mountain's brow,
The depths of Acheron it sees below;
And now, while curling waves above her rise,
Sees from infernal gulfs the lofty skies.
Her sides, assaulted by the wave, rebound,
And with the crash as vehemently sound
As when the iron battering-ram assails,
And o'er the tottering wall at last prevails.
And as fierce lions, fiercer from the chase,
Present their breasts, and levelled weapons face;
So when the wave had felt the tempest's strength,
Backed by a second power, it fell, at length,
With vast explosion, on the powerless hulk,
And whelmed the tackle in its bursting bulk.
The unpitched crannies gape, the wedges slip,
And fatal billows occupy the ship.
From opening clouds prodigious showers descend,
With the black ocean ether seems to blend.
The swelling billows to the poles arise,
And waves unite with cataracts of the skies.

The sails with moisture drip: the air lacks
light;
And denser tempests shroud the densest night.
Yet, fitfully careering, lightnings glide,
With sulphurous track along the lurid tide;
A billow mightier than the rest doth leap,
Within the cavern of the covered ship;
And, as the soldier of surpassing might,
Who oft hath dared the entrenched foe to fight,
At length enjoys his wish, by fame inspired,
And gains the battlements so long desired
Alone, while thousand comrades round him gaze,
And fire the hero with astonished praise;
So when the invincible and furious tide
Hath beaten long the vessel's lofty side,
This billow rising with a fiercer gale,
The weary ship desists not to assail;
Till, having gained its purpose, it descends,
And with the interior compartments blends.
And now without the ship was tempest tossed,
And now within by billows was engrossed.
E'en as a city trembles, when combine
The arrowy shower, the subterranean mine;
By foes within it partially possessed,
By foes without unceasingly oppressed,

Trembles the crew. No longer art prevails;
And in the stoutest resolution fails.
And oft as o'er the ship the billows leap,
So oft are victims hurried to the deep;
Some weep. Some stand in motionless despair;
Some envy those who funeral honours share,
Some spread their ineffectual arms on high,
And utter pleadings to the unseen sky.
Parents, or brothers, waken this man's tear;
That thinks of home, and all that makes home dear:
Each man's affection shapes his secret fear.
Alcyone alone her Ceyx moves,
He breathes no name but that of her he loves.
To think of her, and wish for her, is one;
Yet is he happiest to be there alone.
To find his native coast his glances roam,
Their last looks turn towards their much-loved home.
But where it lies he knows not. All the sky
By pitchy clouds is hidden from his eye.
With eddying whirl the ocean boils around,
And two-fold night broods o'er the abyss profound.
The mast and rudder, by the whirlwind's sweep,
Torn from the vessel, float upon the deep.

The wave triumphant, standing on the deck,
Surveys the waves that all around it break;
Nor doth it less precipitously rush,
Less irresistibly the fragments crush,
Than if some god indignantly had hurled
Athos, and Pindus, on the watery world.
This wave omnipotent alike from weight,
And vehemence, the vessel and its freight,
The greater part of the unhappy crew,
Destined no more the light of day to view,
With a deep gulphing crash, in which are drowned
Shrieks and laments, sweeps to the vast profound.

A few, the remnant of the wretched train,
Cleave to the fragments of the ship in vain.
And Ceyx's hands, a sceptre wont to grasp,
A floating rafter now are fain to clasp.

Alas! all ineffectually he prayed,
To Lucifer, and Œolus, for aid!
But chiefly the spent swimmer's latest breath,
Gasping, invoked Alcyone in death.
Her he remembers, and recalls to mind,
And wishes fervently that waves more kind

His body to her tender gaze may bear;
And that his cold remains at last may share
Pious interment from her faithful care.
Thus while he swims, as often as the sea
Allows free speech, he names Alcyone;
And when the waves themselves he sunk beneath,
That much-loved name in murmurs did he breathe.
Behold, in 'mid sea o'er his head there tossed
A volume of arch'd waters, foam-embossed,
And in its mighty mass the wretch was lost.
That night was Lucifer obscure, nor eye
Of man could recognize his brilliancy.
And since to quit the Heaven was disallowed,
He veiled his visage with the impervious cloud.

Mean time Alcyone, who little guessed
What woes awaited her devoted breast,
Counted the nights. Each vestment she surveyed
With which his manly form shall be arrayed,
Each female robe, that had been laid aside
Till his return, shall make her twice a bride:
That blest return, to which her sanguine mind,
Without reserve, its every thought resigned.
To all the immortals frankincense she brought,
But chiefly Juno's favour she besought;

And to the altars of that power she came,
To pray for him who now was but a name.
His safety she implored with suppliant tone,
And that his constant heart might be her own.
Alas! of all her orisons this one,
Was granted, to her heart's desire, alone.
Juno, who, not without impatience, heard
These vain petitions for the dead preferred;
And that Alcyone may no more stain
Her holy altars with her touch profane,
To Iris cried, "My faithful messenger,
"Without delay to Somnus' court repair;
"Bid him, with Ceyx' form, a dream create,
"And to Alcyone his death relate."
She said, the vest around her Iris threw,
Which shone resplendent with each varying hue.
With an arched course the sky she seemed to sweep,
Seeking the dwelling of the god of sleep!

O'er caverned labyrinths of profound repose
A hollow mount near climes Cimmerian rose;
The house and hiding place of sluggish Sleep:
Here the sun's rays morn, noon, or eve ne'er peep.
Clouds mixed with vapours issue from the ground,
And an uncertain twilight broods around.

The shrill-toned clamour of the crested bird
To hail Aurora here is never heard.
Nor guardian dog, nor geese,* a wiser brood,
Invade the voiceless, drowsy solitude.
Nor beasts, nor birds, nor gale-fanned leaves are found,
Nor human tongues emit a brawling sound.
Calm quiet dwells there. From the rocky source,
The listless Lethe flows with slothful course;
And as its waters o'er smooth pebbles creep,
Its liquid lapses lull to languid sleep.
Around the entrance of this cavern grew
Poppies, and herbs of many-coloured hue:
And humid night with juice of these doth steep
The dark earth's tribes in slumber. There doth creep
No dissonance of crazy hinge to the ear
From any door: no guards are stationed there.
But in the centre of the hall is spread,
On posts of ebony, a downy bed;
And, as a couch in state where dead kings lie,
Sable its hangings, and its canopy.
On this, with head upon his breast that hung,
The god, in languid attitude was flung.

* This alludes to the Capitol being saved by geese, during the assault of Rome by the Gauls.

Countless as grains of sand on ocean's shore,
As leaves in spring, or autumn's harvest store,
So flitting visions round the monarch swarm,
Assuming quaint diversities of form.
The sacred edifice, abruptly bright,
Reflected back an unaccustomed light,
Soon as the entering virgin had dispersed
The opposing phantoms which from all sides burst.

The god, who scarce his eye-lids could unclose,
And o'er and o'er relapsing to a doze,
Smiting his breast with nodding chin, at length
Put forth reluctantly his sluggish strength;
And, leaning on his arm,—tho' he knew well,—
Enquired why thus the virgin sought his cell.

"Oh Sleep, thou rest of all things here," she cries,
"Sleep, placidest of gods, from whom care flies:
"Peace of the soul, who soothest hearts subdued
"With daily toil, by thee for toil renewed;—
"Let dreams, which imitate each real thing,
"Go, in the semblance of the luckless *King*,
"To Herculean Trachis; and, to *his* spouse, there
"The shipwreck's dire catastrophe declare!

"This Juno asks." Her functions ending here,
Iris departs: nor could she longer bear
The vapour's influence; as she felt that sleep
Subtly began through all her limbs to creep,
Abrupt she fled; returning, half-entranced,
By the same bow o'er which she lately glanced.*

From his innumerable race, the sire
Of thousand sons, doth only one require,
Morpheus, expert alike to represent
Another's form, or new ones to invent.
No one like him is skilled to personate
The countenance, the dialect, the gait;
With these too the habiliments to join,
And to each character its air assign.
Morpheus alone the human figure takes,
Another represents birds, beasts, and snakes:
Second in dignity, Phobetor named
On earth, in heaven Icelos proclaimed.
There is a third from these distinguished still,
Who mere material shapes assumes at will.

* Or, "This Juno asks." Her functions being done,
Iris prepared the *dense abode* to shun;
The goddess, with *its influence* half entranced,
Swift as before along the rainbow glanced.

His subtle form he modifies with ease,
To senseless earth, stones, rivers, rocks, and trees.

These shew, "the prime in order and in might,"
To leaders and to kings, their forms at night.
The rest, subaltern vassals, wait their nod,
"The small militia" of the drowsy God.
Old Somnus passed by these; and chose but one
From all his subject tribes, Morpheus alone,
For Juno's high behest; then laid his head,
Dissolved in dozing languor, on his bed.
Through night with noiseless pennons Morpheus flies,
And swiftly lights where Trachis' walls arise.
With changed proportions, no more clad in plumes,
The lineaments of Ceyx he assumes.
And, in that semblance, pallid, like one dead,
He stands, Alcyone, before thy bed.
His dripping beard, and saturated hair,
Before he speaks, the fatal news declare.
Then stooping o'er thy bed, tears fill his eyes,
"Dost thou thy wretched husband recognize;
"Or is my form quite changed by death?" he cries.

" Look at me; and most fond Alcyone,
" Instead of him you love, a shadow see!
" Nought could thy unavailing prayers perform,
" Spite of these prayers I perished in the storm.
" Oh, do not promise to thyself, anew,
" Deluded woman, me, on earth, to view.
" The cloudy south-wind intermix'd with rain,
" Shatter'd the vessel in the Ægean main.
" As I invok'd Alcyone in death,
" The envious billows choak'd my struggling breath.
" No doubtful author tells this tale in sport,
" Nor dost thou hear it from a vague report.
" Both actor and spectator, I relate
" Without disguise, my melancholy fate.
" Arise — shed tears — sigh with suspended breath,
" And put on mourning garments for my death.
" And let me not to Tartarus depart,
" Unwept by her who rul'd my faithful heart."
To this did Morpheus add that voice well known,
Which could belong to Ceyx's lips alone.
And real tears he shed. Her spouse belov'd,
Spake in each word, in every gesture mov'd.
Alcyone was heard to groan and weep,
And stretch'd her arms to clasp him in her sleep.

The unsubstantial shadow mock'd her woe—
She cried: "ah stay, let us together go!"
Rous'd by the dream, and terror's frantic start,
The slumbers of Alcyone depart.
And first, with eager, anxious look, she view'd
The spot, where late, the form of Ceyx stood.
Her handmaids, who o'erheard the frantic scream,
Instantly brought the taper's cheerful gleam.
But when no form of Ceyx it reveal'd,
She rent the garment which her breast conceal'd:
She smote her face, her breast smote o'er and o'er,
And the rich tresses from her temples tore.

Her nurse, her cause for sorrow sought to know,
"Alcyone is nothing, nothing now!
"With consolation mock me not!" she cried,
"Perish'd Alcyone when Ceyx died.
"Shipwreck'd he died!—His spectre I have seen,
"I recogniz'd at once that well known mien!
"With outstretch'd hands I sought the shade to clasp,
"The shadow disappear'd, and fled my grasp.

" But, though the unreal form so soon was lost,
" 'Twas no impostor, but my husband's ghost.
" He had not, I confess, his wonted bloom,
" His lustre was usurp'd by death's pale gloom.
" Wan, naked, dripping from the briny flood,
" Alas, I saw him—on this place he stood."
And saying this, she anxiously explor'd
The spot which lately bore her shipwreck'd Lord.
" This, this, accounts for all my boding fears!
" Hence I oppos'd his purpose with my tears.
" And much I wish, since thou hast gone and died,
" That thou hadst still retain'd me by thy side.
" To have join'd thy fortunes, whatsoe'er they were,
" Would have been soothing to my tender care.
" Life's latest passages had then been shar'd,
" And half the pang of dissolution spar'd.

" I die now unsupported by thy love,
" Absent, the furies of the ocean prove;
" Unsooth'd, unfriended, from the scene afar
" I am devoted to the tempest's war.
" My mind would be more cruel than the sea,
" If I should toil to live bereft of thee.

" But neither will I toil : nor, my life's lord,
" Will I leave thee, thou faithfully deplor'd.
" I come, companion of thy fate, I come !
" Words, if not urns, shall join us in the tomb.
" And if our bones divided mansions claim,
" At least, the inscription shall unite each name."

Sorrow prohibits more, and frantic cries
Choak the unfinish'd accents as they rise.
And from the anguish of her tortur'd heart
Bursts the convulsive throb, and frantic start.

'Twas morning—from her desolate abode
Towards the ocean-beach she slowly trod.—
Anxious each sacred image to record,
The spot she seeks where last she saw her lord.
" And here," she cried, " on this still-conscious shore,
" He sigh'd the parting farewel o'er and o'er.
" And here the kiss, springing towards the wave,
" Of everlasting separation gave !"—
While with distraction not to be express'd,
And pangs known only to love's fated breast,
Object on object, thoughts on thoughts arise,
And while she views the main with wistful eyes,

At distance, in the liquid wave, behold,
A form, she knows not what, is toward her
roll'd.
At first, 'tis doubtful what the form may be;
But soon driven nearer by the flowing sea,
Tho' distant still, a human corse she knew,
And shudder'd at the grief-awakening view.
And tho', that this was Ceyx, she ne'er guess'd,
The omen smote her superstitious breast.
As for a stranger shipwreck'd tears she shed,
" Oh, if thou'st left a wife!" she shivering said.
Over the wave the tilting body sails,
The more she sees it, more her reason fails.
Driven at last to the approaching land,
She saw a figure lying on the strand
But too well known. It was her husband's corse.
" It is!—it is!" she screams with frantic force.
Again her garment, face, and hair, she rends,
And cries, as trembling o'er the corse she bends,
" Oh, agonizing spectacle to see!—
" Thus, most dear husband, dost thou come to
me!"

An artificial pier the waves defied,
And stopp'd the incursion of the threat'ning tide;

Hither she sprung—'twas wondrous that she could—
She flew—and skimm'd the surface of the flood,
With recent wings, a miserable bird;——
And, while she flutters, from her beak is heard
A creaking murmur, immelodious, faint,
Like to the tones of desolate complaint.

She sought the bloodless form, and oft caress'd,
With flapping pinions, the beloved breast;
And often gave upon the sunken cheek
Cold kisses with her ineffectual beak.—
'Tis doubted whether Ceyx felt th' embrace,
Or, lifted by the billows, rais'd his face.
He really felt it: and by pity mov'd,
Some god transform'd them both, since both had lov'd.
But still the same propensities remain,
Their hearts their ancient faithfulness retain.
As birds, they still their former joys retrace,
And become parents to a numerous race.
Alcyone for seven placid days
Her floating nest upon the wave displays;
Calm is the ocean. Œolus decrees,
To serve his offspring's need, unruffled seas.

THE

DEATH OF ACHILLES,

AND

THE CONTEST

OF

AJAX AND ULYSSES

FOR HIS ARMS.

THE DEATH OF ACHILLES,

&c.

But he who with his trident rules the storm,
Mourns with paternal mind his son's* chang'd form.
He marks Achilles with resentment dire,
And exercises his enduring ire.
Then to Apollo he address'd his woes,
When on the lengthen'd war the last year rose.
" Oh, Phœbus, thou whom far the most I love,
" Of all the offspring of Almighty Jove;
" Who foundedst with me Ilion's sacred wall,
" And lofty palaces, now doom'd to fall;
" Does not thy bosom heave th' indignant groan,
" To see these walls by hostile arms o'erthrown?

* Cygnus, the son of Neptune, changed to a swan.

" Dost thou not grieve for thousands good and brave,
" Who dying, fought in vain these towers to save?
" Do not thy thoughts resentfully recal,
" The mighty Hector dragg'd round Ilion's wall?
" And yet he lives, than war itself more dire,
" The fierce Achilles, and defies our ire!—
" But let him once be subject to my rage,
" And he shall learn what war a god can wage!
" But since he is not in my kingdom found,
" Do thou inflict th' unapprehended wound."
The god consented—fir'd with vengeance strong,
By public hatred and by private wrong:
Clad in a cloud, he bent towards Troy his flight,
And there found Paris in the thickest fight.
Ignobly scattering his unfrequent blows
On undistinguish'd and ignoble foes.
Beside the chief the god apparent stood,
" Why dost thou waste thy darts on vulgar blood?
" If lofty enterprize thy breast inflame,
" Turn to Achilles thy ambitious aim,
" Avenge thy murder'd brothers; and destroy,
" By one decisive blow, the curse of Troy."

And, as he thus exhorted him, he shew'd
Pelides' sword in Trojan gore embrued.
He gave the bow a more resistless force,
He gave the arrow a more certain course.
Tho' Hector now was dead, this master stroke
A transient joy in Priam's bosom woke.—
Thou, therefore, oh Pelides, who didst boast
Invincible success, thyself an host,
Transferredst now the glory of thy name
To the Seducer of a Grecian Dame!
Rather hadst thou, than fall by such a foe,
Penthesilea's axe had given the blow:
Death by an Amazon had seem'd to thee,
Glory compar'd to such a victory.

And now that terror of the Phrygian race,
Of boasting Greece the glory and the grace,
The unexampled hero is entomb'd,
And the same god that arm'd the chief consum'd.
Now of the man who seem'd the bounds to spurn
Of this low world, his friends the ashes burn;
And scarce remains what fills the scanty urn.
But still that glory, matchless and sublime,
Scorns the cold menace of consuming time.

Proportion'd to his valour is his fame;
By this Achilles vindicates his name,
Nor feels pale Tartarus' unreal claim.
His shield, as if its former master fir'd,
The furies of conflicting war inspir'd;
Arms are produc'd from arms. The mighty prize
Ambition litigates and magnifies.—
Oïlean Ajax, Diomed withdraw,
And both th' Atridæ shrink with conscious awe.
The innate consciousness alone inflames,
Which stamps with justice what th' aspirant claims;
Ajax the elder sprung from Telamon,
And the ambition of Laërtes' son.
But Agamemnon, with a prudent mind,
The invidious arbitrement declin'd;
The contest to the chieftains he transferr'd,
Who met obedient to his awful word.

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* The leaders sate. The rest around them wheeled;
While Ajax, master of the seven-fold shield,
To these arose. With countenance that spurn'd
Patient appeal, towards the fleet he turn'd;

* At this place, in the original, commences the 13th book of the Metamorphoses.

Then the Sigæan shore he sternly eyed,
Stretch'd forth his hands indignantly, and cried:
" Shall Ajax, in the presence of that fleet,
" Oh Jove!—Ulysses as a rival meet?
" Say, did he hesitate that fleet to yield
" To flames of Troy?—which from it I repelled.
" Then is it safer with feign'd words to fight,
" Than to meet hand to hand with manly might?
" As 'tis not mine with dainty phrase to charm,
" So is my rival powerless to perform.
" As much as I am blest with martial force,
" So is he blest with eloquent discourse.
" Nor needeth it, oh Grecians, that to you
" I tell my deeds; those deeds yourselves did view.
" 'Tis for Ulysses to repeat his own,
" Perform'd at night—to all the world unknown.
" I do confess that great rewards I claim;
" Alas, my rival tarnishes their fame.
" Nor is it glorious to possess the spoil,
" However great, that urg'd Ulysses' toil.
" E'en now he bears the prize, since he may say
" That he hath rivall'd me for one brief day.
" But I, e'en tho' equivocal in might,
" Am potent in hereditary right.

" On me doth Telamon his honours shed,
" Who took Troy's ramparts by Alcides led.
" Who, with his trusty Pegasæan band,
" His vessel steer'd to Colchis' distant strand.
" His sire was Æacus, who legislates
" Where Sisyphus is doom'd by sterner fates,
" To urge eternally the ponderous stone:
" Him highest Jove confest to be his son.
" So am I third from Jove: nor, Grecians, hence
" Do I infer additional pretence,
" Did not the ancestral privilege I bear
" Make me the great Achilles' rightful heir.
" He was my brother:* not to mention *worth,*
" I seek a brother's arms by right of birth.
" Why should the blood by Sisyphus† supplied,
" And by deception most to him allied,
" The name of Ajax fraudulently place
" 'Mid the descendants of a foreign race?
" Am I to be denied the use of arms,
" Because I first confronted war's alarms?
" Because, with love of martial fame entranc'd,
" Without persuasion I the first advanc'd?

* The children of brothers, as were Achilles and Ajax, were formerly called brothers.

† Sisyphus was a robber, who, according to some writers, had an intercourse with Anticlea, the mother of Ulysses, before she was married to Laertes.

" And shall he be preferr'd who last remain'd,
" And shunn'd the conflict with a madness feign'd;
" Until in cunning stratagem more wise,
" The son of Nauplius stripp'd the mean disguise,
" The recreant coward, dragg'd to scenes of blood,
" Ruin'd himself, and serv'd the general good?
" Now are to him the choicest arms assign'd,
" Who heretofore the use of arms declin'd?
" And we, who were ambitious of the fight,
" Are cheated of hereditary right.
" I wish the base imposture had deceiv'd,
" Or real madness every sense bereav'd;
" And that this mover of atrocious crime
" Had never come to Phrygia's hostile clime.
" Then Philocletes, infamously doom'd,
" His days on Lemnos' shore had not consum'd.
" Who now, they say, laments with bitter groans,
" In sylvan caves conceal'd, that soften stones.
" Who lifts to heaven the imprecating cry,
" Which the just gods shall hear and ratify.
" And now the man confederate oaths who swore,
" One of the leaders to this hostile shore,

" One to whom Hercules his shafts consign'd,
" Oppress'd with hunger, rack'd with tortur'd mind,
" Is cloth'd and fed by birds, than men more kind.
" And to procure subsistence does employ
" Those arrows destin'd to the fall of Troy.
" Yet still he lives, exempted by the fates
" From dangerous fellowship with one who hates.
" Had there the son of Nauplius been exil'd,
" He would have liv'd, by slander unrevil'd.
" Or dying there, he might have blest the lot
" That sav'd his name from ignominious blot.
" Ulysses, who a secret hate indulg'd,
" Since Palamedes to the world divulg'd
" The simulated lunatic, who tried
" His real fears by feign'd disease to hide,
" Alleged that he the Grecian cause betray'd,
" And speciously th' invented crime display'd.
" The gold which he had previously conceal'd,
" With execrable artifice reveal'd.
" Thus he, by exile, or by death, at length,
" Contrives to palsy the Pelasgan strength.
" Thus must Ulysses, if he fights, be fear'd;
" Who, though, oh Nestor, hero much rever'd,

" Thee he excel in speech, 'twill not efface
" The shame that stamps the coward with disgrace;
" Or bribe the most indulgent to exalt
" Thy base desertion to a venial fault.
" Weary with age, and by a wound delay'd,
" The Pylian king implores Ulysses' aid;
" The apostate friend, the evasive miscreant flies,
" Deaf to the venerable monarch's cries.
" Witness Tydides, whom the sight did grieve,
" If word I utter wrong the fugitive!—
" Who oft by prayers, importunate and stern,
" Conjur'd the trembling recreant to return;
" And, like a warrior that is strange to fear,
" Tax'd his desertion with reproof severe.
" The gods behold mankind with equal eyes;
" He, who refus'd it, now for succour cries.
" He is deserted as he did desert:
" His own mean maxims on himself revert.
" He calls his friend. I heard his panting breath,
" I saw his horror at approaching death.
" I interpos'd the shelter of my shield,
" And screen'd him lying prostrate on the field.

" I lengthen'd out his life for future days;
" Of all my deeds the one that least claims praise.
" If thou persistest to dispute the prize,
" Visit the place that echoed to thy cries.
" Bring back the foe, and let the wound appear,
" The suppliant posture, and the former fear.
" Nestle beneath the shelter of the shield,
" And in that shelter to thy rival yield.
" When I had sav'd him, whom a wound denies,
" The power to stand—lo! free from wound he flies.
" Hector was present, and from their abodes
" Allur'd to battle the auxiliar gods.
" Not only Ithacus, where he appear'd,
" But e'en the boldest of the Grecians fear'd.
" Such universal terror did inspire
" That arm of thunder, and that soul of fire.
" I presently the enormous chief subdued,
" Exulting in the waste of hostile blood.
" I alone check'd him, seeking with proud aim
" A rival worthy of his lofty name.
" Petitions for my life the Greeks preferr'd,
" The general importunity was heard.
" And if you seek the fortune of the strife,
" Submission tarnish'd not my former life.

" Behold the Trojans sword and fire unite,
" And Jove himself, against the fleet to fight.
" Where now was eloquent Ulysses gone?
" For I protected, with my breast alone,
" A thousand ships which Troy prepar'd to burn,
" Your sole reliance for secure return.
" Oh, let these arms the rescued ships repay!—
" And if 'tis lawful what I feel to say,
" 'Tis I to yield a prize that ye condemn!
" The arms seek Ajax, and not Ajax them!

" With these exploits let Ithacus compare
" Rhesus and Dolon slain in baby war!
" Th' inveigled Helenus at night decoy'd,
" And with her stol'n palladium Troy destroy'd:
" Nothing is done except in night's dim shade,
" Nothing is done without Tydides' aid.
" If once such poor deserts claim such regard,
" Divide the arms, and Diomed reward.
" Yet if your hearts to equity incline,
" To Diomed the greater part assign!—
" But why to Ithacus these arms adjudge,
" Who fights as if he owed a private grudge.
" Who evermore insidiously beguiles
" His simple rival by atrocious wiles.

" The golden helmet that reflects the day
" The coward's snug concealment will betray.
" His head droops consciously, and disavows
" The weight adapted to Achilles' brows.
" Unwarlike arms are all unfit to wield
" The Pelian javelin, and the Pelian shield.
" The vast circumference by worlds emboss'd,
" Fits not the timid hand by thefts engross'd.
" Why dost thou seek, oh man of little soul,
" Debilitating treasures to control?
" And if the Grecians thus these arms employ,
" 'Tis that thou may'st be spoil'd, not fear'd, by Troy.
" And flight, in which alone thou dost succeed,
" Such trophies would provokingly impede.
" Add that thy shield, so much in battle spar'd,
" Preserves its gloss, untarnish'd, unimpair'd.
" While mine half shatter'd, and no more a guard,
" Admits the weapon which it ought to ward.
" But why should I debase myself to plead
" The best persuasive is the heroic deed.
" 'Mid yonder hostile host these trophies throw,
" And them, on him who rescues them, bestow."

Here the impetuous Ajax made a pause,
His speech was follow'd by a loud applause.

Until Ulysses from his seat did rise,
Fix'd on the ground awhile his lingering eyes;
Then slowly rais'd them to the Chiefs around,
And from his lips breath'd the expected sound.
Nor was there wanting courtly eloquence,
Or flowing periods dignified by sense.

" If, oh ye Grecians, vows alike preferr'd,
" By you and me propitiously were heard,
" It would not seem ambiguous whose should be,
" In this momentous strife, the victory.
" Still Greece her lov'd Achilles should enjoy,
" And he, in her defence, his arms employ.
" But since unequal Fate to me denies,
" And you, a presence that we so much prize,"
(And here across his brow his hands he drew,
As if he felt th' involuntary dew,)
" Who is more fit than he who gain'd his aid,
" To gain the arms which Pelias' son array'd?
" Unless, perchance, it serves my rival's need
" That he seems stupid, as he is indeed.
" Unless, perchance, my skill, by doom perverse,
" Spent in your service, now must be my curse.
" And if that power, which now its lord defends,
" That power so oft exerted for my friends:
" That eloquence, if eloquence it be,
" Plead from depreciating envy free.

" My generous friends, forgive the infirmity!
" All see their natural gifts with partial eye.
" The hereditary honours of a name,
" Influence, since unacquir'd, without a claim,
" Scarce do I call our own, scarce thence pretensions frame.
" But since my rival hath thought fit to prove
" That he is grandson to Almighty Jove,
" I too may claim, my title to enforce,
" The same alliance to the same great source.
" My sire Laertes, from Arcesius springs,
" The first is offspring to the king of kings.
" Nor in this unequivocal descent
" Is one disgrac'd by wrong or banishment.
" And by Cyllenius, to increase my pride,
" I am ennobled on my mother's side.
" Thus both my parents boast a source divine—
" But the pretensions of my mother's line
" Outweighing his, that in fraternal blood
" My father's purer hands were ne'er embrued:
" This does not urge me on this solemn day
" To assert my claim. The cause by merit weigh.
" Provided that my rival don't infer,
" Since Telamon and Peleus brothers were,
" Claim to success. Provided that the cause
" Be tried by worth, and not by lineal laws.

" But, if proximity of blood must plead,
" Let the surviving sire or son* succeed.
" Say, how can Ajax to the arms pretend?
" The arms to Phthia, or to Scyros send?
" Teucer like him to Achilles is allied,
" Yet in his birth he seems not to confide.
" Then if performance claim the victory,
" My deeds the bounds of narrative defy.
" Yet in a brief succession I will seek
" To sketch those deeds since justice bids me speak.
" Thetis, admonish'd of Achilles' fate,
" His sex by dress sought to dissimulate.
" All that beheld him the disguise believ'd,
" And with the rest e'en Ajax was deceiv'd.
" I, with his female trappings, interlaid
" Arms, which as soon as seen the man betray'd.
" Ere he resign'd his feminine disguise,
" He grasp'd the spear and shield before my eyes,
" 'Thou, goddess-born,' I cried: ''tis Heaven's decree
" That fated Pergamus shall fall by thee!

* Peleus the father, and Pyrrhus the son of Achilles, were still living.

" Why dost thou hesitate to abolish Troy ?'
" I threw my arms around th' aspiring boy,
" Compell'd the mighty man to deeds of might,
" And to these arms from hence infer my right.
" I with my javelin Telephus subdued,
" And when o'ercome, I staunch'd the suppliant's blood.
" I vanquish'd Thebes—the power of Lesbos foil'd—
" Tenedos, Chryse, Cylla, Scyros, spoil'd.
" And that Lyrnessian haunts are void and mute,
" To my availing enterprize impute.
" 'Twas my persuasion rais'd against the foe,
" The arm that laid the mighty Hector low.
" Hence do I claim the arms Achilles wore,
" To him who furnish'd them those arms restore.
" When one man's insult rous'd united Greece,
" And thousand ships from Aulis sought release;
" When tantalizing winds expected long,
" Were not, or *were*, contrariously strong;
" And when Diana's cruel rage decreed
" Atrides' unoffending child to bleed;
" The father disapprov'd—the Gods disdain'd—
" And o'er the king the sire triumphant reign'd;

" I, in accordance to the public good,
" The pleadings of parental love subdued.
" Nor to confess will Agamemnon grudge,
" I gain'd a hard cause from a partial judge.
" At last, the public weal, his brother's cause,
" The sceptre's stern immitigable laws,
" The monarch's contumacious mind o'ercame
" To sacrifice parental love to fame.
" I was deputed with consummate art
" T'ensnare the mother's more tenacious heart.
" Whither, if Ajax had been sent, I ween,
" Aulis had still our idle vessels seen.
" I was dispatch'd to Ilion's proud abode,
" The pavement of its senate house I trod:
" As yet 'twas full of men—yet, undismay'd,
" The cause of Greece I fervently display'd.
" Upbraided Paris: Helen's charms reclaim'd:
" And humbled Priam, and Antenor tam'd.
" Paris, and those confederate in his rape,
" Scarce suffer'd me in safety to escape.
" This Menelaus knew—from thence we date
" A common lot expos'd to hostile hate.
" 'Twould outrage patience if I were to tell,
" How oft I've fought, how often counsel'd well,

" Since the long siege began. The first fight o'er,
" The Trojans garrisoned, commit no more
" Their cause to open war: and now, at length,
" Ten tedious years exhaust our mutual strength.
" And what canst thou, who lovest to traduce
" All deeds but those of war, meanwhile produce?
" But, if thou seekest my exploits to know
" I fortify the camp, perplex the foe;
" My comrades perseveringly conjure,
" Protracted war with patience to endure.
" How to be arm'd, and how to be sustain'd,
" My circumspective providence explain'd.
" Where duty, or where difficulty call'd,
" I was dispatch'd; and hasten'd unappall'd.

" Behold the monarch by a dream engross'd,
" Sent by great Jove to lure him from his post,
" Proclaims return to our confederate force,
" And vindicates the mandate by its source.

" Stern Ajax cried, disdaining thoughts of peace,
" That Troy was forfeit to enduring Greece.

" Whate'er he could, he did, to urge our stay;
" Yet could he not th' embarking troops delay.
" Why doth he not take arms?—Why not excite
" The generous wish to perish or to fight?
" Nor is this service more than fits the post
" Of one that never speaks except to boast?
" What!—And didst thou too fly?—Spread to the gales,
" I saw, and blush'd to see, thy recreant sails!
" I cried without delay, 'What Demons urge
" Troy to forsake, tottering on fate's last verge?
" What shall we carry home but infamy,
" If from a siege of ten years, now we fly?'

" With these, and other words; while grief inspir'd,
" That eloquence th' emergency requir'd,
" The contumacious army I reclaim'd;
" The weak upbraided, and the strong inflam'd.
" His trembling comrades Agamemnon calls,
" Nor one consoling word from Ajax falls.
" Thersites dar'd to tax the chiefs with wrong,
" Till I repress'd his contumelious tongue.
" I rise—and with my eloquence persuade
" My friends once more the realms of Troy t' invade,

" And from that period on myself redounds
" Each glorious exploit that the foe confounds.
" Oh, say what Greek commemorates thy deeds?
" Oh, say what Trojan by thy valour bleeds?
" To me Tydides every act relates,
" And triumphs in Ulysses' guardian fates.
" And from so many of the Grecian name
" To be preferr'd by Diomed is fame.
" Nor was I singled out by lot to go;—
" Yet in defiance of the night and foe,
" I ventur'd forth, like Dolon, as a spy,
" Yet not like Dolon preordain'd to die.
" Yet did not my right hand its victim slay,
" Till he was forced distinctly to betray,
" What projects of defence perfidious Troy
" Against our armies purpos'd to employ.
" All things I learn'd, nor any point resign'd,
" For speculation, or conjecture blind.
" Now nought forbade return with praise well bought,
" Yet, not contented, Rhesus' tents I sought;
" And in their tents, him and his friends subdued—
" Thus, wheresoe'er I turn'd, success pursued.
" Blest with my captive, and with prosperous war,
" In mimic triumph I ascend the car.

" And shall ye doubt t'award his arms to me,
" Whose steeds were pledg'd to Dolon's treachery?
" And shall the son of Telamon, elate
" In your decision, be more fortunate?
" Why should I celebrate Sarpedon's train
" Strew'd by my valour on the Phrygian plain?
" My hand Cæranon and Alaston slew,
" Chromius, Alcander, Halius overthrew.
" Thoon, and Prytanis, and Noëmon,
" Charops, Chersidamas, and Ennomon.
" Five less renown'd beneath the Trojan wall,
" Vanquish'd by my impetuous valour, fall.
" And I have honorable wounds to shew,
" Which might extort respect e'en from a foe.
" And, that you may believe, behold!" he cried;
And from his bosom drew his robe aside.
" Behold the bosom never meanly spar'd,
" In peace your safety, and in war your guard!
" But, Ajax thro' so many years of war,
" Hath lost no blood, can shew no manly scar.
" That he hath taken arms why should he boast,
" And fought 'gainst Troy and Jove on Asia's coast?

" He took them I confess; nor do I aim
" With cold detraction to asperse his name.
" But let him not a vain distinction seek
" From virtues common to the meanest Greek.
" Patroclus, who Pelides' armour wore,
" Drove the adventurous Trojans from the shore;
" Preparing, by an universal doom,
" Our fleet, and its defender, to consume.
" You think that you alone dare Hector meet,
" Forgetful of the monarch of our fleet:
" Forgetful of our leaders, and of me,
" The ninth appointed by supreme decree.
" What was the issue of your mighty war?
" Both thou and Hector parted without scar!
" With what distress do I those days recall,
" Which saw the bulwark of the Grecians fall,
" The stern Achilles!—Neither grief, nor dread,
" Repell'd my footsteps from the mighty dead.
" His form inanimate these shoulders bore,
" And bore those arms whose honours I implore.
" I have a body which can match their size,
" I have a spirit which their worth can prize.
" Was it on this account that Thetis, fir'd
" With high ambition, for her son desir'd

" Celestial gifts: that one devoid of soul,
" Rough, and unpolished, should those gifts control?
" Nor would he comprehend the shield emboss'd
" With ocean, and the earth's extended coast.
" With stars, with Pleiades, and Hyades,
" And Arctus, privileg'd from whelming seas.
" Where different cities wondrously combine,
" And where the splendours of Orion shine.
" And shall he seek to grapple in his hand
" Arms whose device he will not understand?
" What! shall he chide me, that with lingering feet
" I join'd, tho' backward, the confederate fleet?
" And feels he no compunction by such speech,
" The fame of great Achilles to impeach?
" And if it be a crime to simulate,
" We both must equally excite his hate.
" Or if delay his indignation warms;
" We both delay'd—tho' I was first in arms.
" Him, a devoted mother's anxious breast,
" And, me, a wife's devoted care, repress'd.
" To them we gave the first conflicting hours;
" To you we gave our lives' remaining powers.
" Nor do I fear an unconfuted blame,
" Stamp'd with th' alliance of so great a name.

" But by Ulysses brought, Achilles came;—
" Can Ajax to Ulysses say the same?—
" Nor can you praise him that his foolish tongue
" Taxes my conduct with imputed wrong.
" Me when he domineeringly arraigns,
" You he asperses with associate stains.
" If Palamedes' fate be such a blot
" To the accuser, is each judge forgot?
" But he was all incompetent to wrest
" Conviction from a crime so manifest.
" You saw it—it was openly expos'd:
" The hidden treasure from the ground disclos'd.
" Me why should Ajax scornfully revile,
" That Philoctetes pines in Lemnos' isle?—
" Rather, ye Sons of Greece, should you resent
" A calumny impeaching your consent.
" Nor can I disavow that I display'd
" My eloquence, the hero to persuade
" From war's o'ertasking labours to refrain,
" And all the perils of the stormy main.—
" That he, unfit in hardships to engage,
" Should seek by rest his torments to assuage.
" He listened, and he lives—my words to prove,
" As fortunate as they were words of love.
" Luckless, or lucky, 'twould my cause defend,
" To prove that what I said became the friend.

" Whom, since the seers unanimously call
" As indispensable to Ilion's fall;
" Be not Ulysses sent to Lemnos' coast,
" Let Ajax bring him to his destin'd post.
" Let him the son of Pæan mollify,
" Stung with revenge, and fiercest agony;
" Or by some incommunicable art
" Delude his stern inexorable heart.—
" Sooner shall Simois retrogressive flow,
" And naked Ida all its trees forego;
" Sooner be Greece confederate with Troy,
" Than,— if Ulysses ceases to employ,
" For you his skill in diplomatic laws,—
" Ajax shall benefit the Grecians' cause.

" Although, oh Philoctetes! torrents roll
" Of dark resentment in thy warring soul;
" Though thou the king and me dost execrate,
" With all the bitterness of bitterest hate;
" Tho' thou, without remission, dost ordain
" My life to dread retributory pain,
" And dost incessantly with suppliant breath,
" Implore the means to consummate my death:
" Yet, as thou seek'st thy foe to subjugate,
" So shalt thou yield to me thy passive fate;

" So will I seek thy person to reclaim,
" And bring thy arrows to their destin'd aim.
" E'en as the Trojan seer I captive made,
" Who all the oracles of Troy betray'd:
" E'en as I ravish'd, with adventurous hand,
" Troy's strong palladium from the hostile band.
" And after this shall vaunting Ajax dare
" Himself with me in prowess to compare?
" The Fates forbade that Troy's devoted wall,
" While the palladium guarded it, should fall.
" Where then was mighty Ajax? What, not heard,
" In that conjuncture with one prompting word?
" Why didst thou fear the task? and why did I
" Night's thickest shades, and sentinels, defy?
" The hostile ranks did not I penetrate?
" And, more than this, advance thro' Ilion's gate?
" The thresholds pass of palaces divine,
" And snatch the goddess from her secret shrine.
" And, spite of foes, when snatch'd, my steps retrace,
" And in our ramparts the palladium place?
" Had I not done this deed, his seven-fold shield,
" Ajax, in vain, had blazon'd in the field.
" Our foes' last hope that night my hands destroy;
" Making it vincible, I conquer Troy.

" Oh, cease to look on Diomed askance,
" With envious whispers, and sarcastic glance.
" In these affairs let him divide the praise.
" Didst thou thy buckler unassisted raise
" Our vessels to defend? A numerous guard
" Surrounded *thee!*—but *one* my danger shar'd.
" Yet Diomed had sought this awful spoil,
" Had he not reckon'd that a warrior's toil
" Must vail its honours to a wise man's claim;
" Not known that might is not the all of fame.
" The younger Ajax, with more just pretence,
" Had also sought this splendid recompense;
" And fierce Euryphilus, by all unblam'd,
" Thoas, Idomeneus, the meed had claim'd,
" Meriones' and Menelaus' voice
" Had urg'd pretensions, and perplex'd the choice.
" But these, not second to thyself in name,
" Decline a contest with my nobler fame.
" Thou hast a right hand useful in the fight;
" But thought is wanting to defend *our* right.
" Thou boastest valour with a mind unwise,
" While long contingencies before me rise.—
" Thou fightest valiantly. Atrides knows
" From me the time of battle. Thou thy foes

" By strength appallest, we by dauntless skill;
" And, as the master of the ship, whose will
" Governs the vessel, him the oar that sways,
" The leader, him that leader who obeys,
" So, thee, do I surpass. In me my hand
" Serves my thought's purpose. Hence I claim command.
" But ye, oh chieftains, with these arms reward
" Him, whose sagacity has prov'd your guard.
" By many a sleepless night, and anxious morn,
" And by my manhood in your service worn;
" By all the tedious years that I have thought
" For my lov'd comrades, for my comrades fought;
" Oh chiefs, this prize I ask with fervent prayer,
" Worthy for you to give, for me to share!—
" Our toils are ended. I have banish'd hence
" The Fates that menac'd in proud Troy's defence.
" And having made it liable to fall
" I have laid prostrate Ilion's towering wall.

" Oh, by our hopes, by Troy's devoted towers,
" And by those gods no longer her's but our's;
" By what remains where death must be defied,
" If any bold attempt must yet be tried;

" If there be yet severer tests of skill,
" The measure of the Trojan fates to fill;
" Give me these arms! To me if ye give not,
" Be ne'er Ulysses in their gift forgot!
" To that devote them!" and his finger shew'd
Where the Palladium's fatal image stood.

The admiring nobles by their verdict prove,
That eloquence, where valour fails, can move;
And he, who oft confronted undismay'd,
Alone, the rage of fire, and Hector's blade,
Despondingly his disappointment bore:
Anguish subdued him, unsubdued before!
He grasp'd the sword. " Ulysses," he exclaim'd,
" This will not seek: this I may use unblam'd.
" This I will turn against myself! The sword
" That hath so many Phrygian bosoms gored,
" Shall now be reeking with its master's blood;—
" Lest Ajax save by Ajax be subdued."—

E'en as he spake, his last wound he imprest,
Burying the driven cutlass in his breast.
Nor could his hand the griding blade expel;
Driven by the spouting blood, on earth it fell.
The earth distain'd with Ajax's trickling gore,
A purple blossom from its bosom bore,

Such as appear'd from the discolour'd ground,
When Hyacinthus felt the fatal wound.
The same inscription on the petals grow:
Th' initials here, and there the type of woe.

FINIS.

J. M'Creery, Printer,
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